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The law and the prophets

THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.

THE HULSEAN LECTURES

FOR 1882,

Preached before the University of Cambridge,

BY

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PREFACE.

The Four Lectures contained in this book were the Hulsean Lectures of 1882-3, and were read in Great S. Mary's Church, Cambridge, before the University on four Sundays in January and February, 1883. They are now published very nearly in their original form.

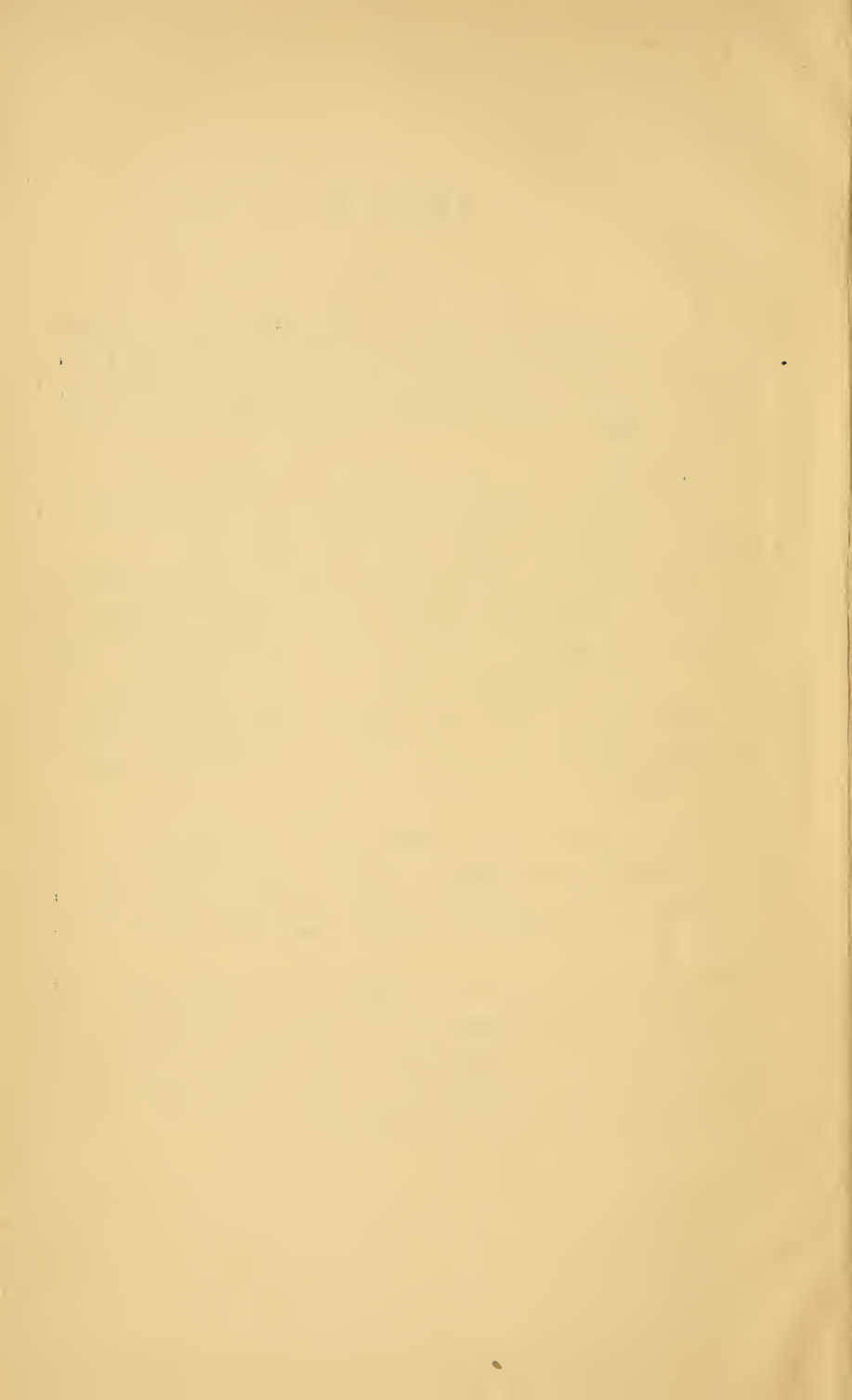
Explanatory notes and dissertations on different points which seemed to demand a fuller treatment than was possible within the limits of a sermon or lecture have been added since.

The lectures and their appendices are an attempt to point out some of the difficulties, historical and theological, attending the theory of the School of Reuss on the composition of the Pentateuch and the historical books of the Old Testament. The particular form of that theory, which is stated and maintained by Professor Kuenen in his two books, "The Religion of Israel" and "Prophets and Prophecy," has been the special object of attack.

All obligations are, it is hoped, duly acknowledged in the notes. The dissertations and notes owe much to an able series of articles published in *The Presbyterian Review* (American) for 1882 and 1883. To one of these my attention was kindly directed by Professor Westcott.

My thanks are due to the Rev. J. W. Hicks, M.A., M.D., Fellow, Lecturer, and Dean of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, and to the Rev. J. Sharpe, M.A., late Fellow and Lecturer of Christ's College, Cambridge, for their kind suggestions and their careful revision of the earlier proof sheets.

F. W.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Lecture I. The Preparation.....	1
Excursus. The Witness of the New Testament to the Old	25
Lecture II. The Prophets and the History	38
Excursus. The Book Genesis in its relation to the Critical Theory	64
Lecture III. The Law and the Prophets	77
Excursus. The Writings of the Prophets of the Eighth Century B.C.....	109
Excursus. The Period of the Judges	117
Excursus. Jeremiah and his Times.....	121
Lecture IV. The Prophets' Essential Office	127
Excursus. The Disagreement of the Critics.....	160
Excursus. Critical Results and the Divine Authority of the Scriptures ...	167
Excursus. Unfulfilled Prophecies	173
Excursus. Ezekiel's Legislation	176
Notes	190





LECTURE I.

THE PREPARATION.

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord.”—Isa. xl. 2.

There is a lesson which man is taught in many ways, but which he is very slow to learn. It is the necessity of preparation before any great work can be taken in hand and brought to a prosperous end. Before men begin to build, they must dig the foundation. Before they reap the harvest, they must sow the seed and prepare the soil. The truth is an elementary one, and yet through neglect of it, many a good work has failed, many an earnest worker has despaired.

And the greater and more lasting the work, the longer and deeper the preparation must be. Things which shoot up quickly, quickly pass away. A tree does not spring up in a night. A nation is not born in a day. History shews us the long period of conception, and the painful period of travail, before great ideas can be brought to the birth, before great changes can be wrought in the political world. Geology teaches us the countless number of the ages of preparation in which this earth was fitted to be the home of man.

There is one event in the world's history which by every Christian must be admitted to be unique, alike in itself and in its consequences. The coming of God in the flesh, bringing life to a dying world,

bringing light to a dark world, bringing peace to a world at enmity with God, may find its types and shadows, but it can find no parallels amongst other historical facts. There had been comings of great men, but never the coming of The Great God. There had been revelations of truth, but now The Truth Himself was revealed. Great kingdoms had been set up quickly to pass away, but now the world-wide eternal kingdom was established. We may call it a crisis in history; indeed it was. It was The Crisis, the turning point in the history of the world, the turning power in the history of each individual man. We may describe it in its results as a Re-Creation, but even that word is inadequate, unless it means much more than a restoration of the old Creation to its original beauty and perfection. The preparation for this unique, this stupendous, this inconceivable event, how can we exaggerate its importance? So much preparation was needed for any one of the ages; how much more for that which is described as the fulness of them all? So many agencies were set at work to fit this world to be the home of man; how can we overestimate the preliminary work by which we men were prepared to be the home of God?

And indeed the Christian Church has not been disposed to under estimate the importance and value of this preparation. Her earliest teachers, one and all, were men who had received the highest and deepest preparation for their office. Some of them made it their special work to connect the new dispensation with the old; to identify Jesus of Nazareth with the

Messiah of the predictions of the Hebrew prophets and the longings of the Jewish Nation. And, what is of more importance, those Christian teachers whose thoughts and hopes were in the future rather than in the past, never severed themselves from that past. None of the great early Christian teachers ceased to be Jews. Most important of all, the great Teacher Himself declared that He came, not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them.

✓ It is well worthy of notice that almost the earliest heresy with which the Church battled was one which denied the reality of this preparation. A fundamental Gnostic doctrine was the suddenness of the appearance of the Christ in human fashion. The Gnostics taught, it is true, that there was a preparation, a development, so to speak, of the Supreme Being before He could stoop so low as earth. But there was no preparation of man for the reception of his God. Suddenly, at the time of His baptism, the Christ appeared in human form upon the earth. His human nature, or human body, if indeed it could be called human, had no previous history. It did not grow like ours. It could not trace its origin from the parents of the race like ours. It was an instrument which the heavenly Christ took to Himself for His work, and which He flung away when He had no further use for it. Thus teaching, the Gnostics cut off the Christ from all the men before or after Him. They were not bone of His bone, or flesh of His flesh. Thus was denied all preparation of the human nature by which the Saviour of men worked. And the world

into which He came, it also had not been prepared for His coming. If the supreme spiritual God had in any way come in contact with this material world, it had been by accident; nay rather, by mishap. In this world of ours God had not been the king, and never could be the king. With this human nature of ours, God had not been, and never could be united. The Christ did not come to give this earth, in their fulness, truths of which He had already vouchsafed us fore-tastes, but He came to deprive us of a higher life, which had unawares come in contact with material bodies, and had been contaminated by them. Instead of light struggling with the darkness to subdue it, the Gnostics imagined light struggling in the darkness to escape from it. If fuller light was revealed by their Christ it was only that He might gather up the stray light lost from heaven, and take it for ever away. This is the Gnostic gospel. This is the gospel without the Old Testament. This is the gospel in which there was no due preparation either of humanity or of Christ's Human Nature. //

Not such the teaching of the Church. She has taught us to regard the history of the world as the unfolding of the great plan by which God would gather all nations and peoples to Himself. In the Divine dealings there are no such things as accidents or mishaps. Before ever the world was, the eternal purpose of God had been determined. For its accomplishment, all things in heaven and earth worked together. Did light come? It was good in itself, it came with a beneficent purpose in the present, but it pointed to a coming and a fuller

light. Was truth revealed? It was indeed truth, it was never superseded, but it indicated higher truths as yet behind a veil. The prophets with one voice proclaimed the coming Prophet. The messengers, they came to prepare in the wilderness the way for the King.

Nor must we forget the preparation of the human tabernacle in which the Christ dwelt. Nay rather, for the words are inadequate, the human nature which was to be united with the Divine Person of the Son of God. There was an election out of an election. A people was chosen out of the nations. A family was chosen from the people. A blessed maiden, pure and undefiled, was chosen from the family. The people was separated from the nations by signs and wonders, by peculiar blessings and unexampled afflictions. There was a long silent education and preparation of the family through many generations. At length she came from whose pure body quickened by the Holy Ghost, the human nature of the Saviour of the world could be derived. That Saviour is indeed like His great prototype, without earthly father. He has indeed neither beginning of days nor end of life. But unlike him, He is not without mother or without descent. We own Him to be Son of Mary, and we know that He is therefore Son of David, Son of Abraham, and son of Adam too. Mary the mother of Christ, is the chosen vessel of a chosen family of a chosen people. She, by especial grace, had learnt the lessons which God had through generations been teaching her family and her nation.

It is a beautiful idea—this divine preparation

never ceasing and continuously developing. Aye! and its beauty is a witness to its truth. We feel that if God did indeed become man, then God can never have been wholly absent from any age of the world. Before the fulness there must have been the filling up. Before God took up His abiding dwelling-place amongst us, He must have paid us visits, He must have sent amongst us messengers. Before He united Himself with human nature, He must have had intercourse with it. We know what the Christ is to this world in the present age. We know something of what He will be in the age yet to come. But our Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He is the Christ, not of the present, nor of the future merely; He is the Christ of all time and of all ages. He is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Not as the starting point, but as the centre point of revelation must the day of His coming be regarded; not as the beginning, but as the fulness of time. His coming was an event which cast its light on all the preceding ages. He is indeed the Alpha—the Beginning, the Source of all Light and Truth. But the Son of God was the Light of Men before He was Incarnate in the flesh. There was a conception of the Word of God in the womb of the earth, myriads of years before there was a conception of Jesus in the womb of Mary. At length the days of deliverance were accomplished; the Word was manifested, the Christ was born.

O, if we banish God from His own world in any age of its history, if we regard any year in that history as not in some degree an *Annus Domini*, if we draw

a hard and fast line and say, "Here the Christian era begins," if we limit the eternal kingdom by some limit of time, then our idea of Christ and His work is incomplete. If the doctrine of the Incarnation is true, if Christ is indeed the God-made-man, then all the preceding ages can only be regarded as ages of preparation, aye! and only sufficient preparation for the God Incarnate. Many voices must have cried out, "In the wilderness prepare ye the way of the Lord, in the desert make straight His ways." Not during the limits of one man's life, not by the work of one man's strength, could all the valleys of the world be exalted, its mountains made low, its crooked things made straight, and its rough places plain.

And this preparation is not to be regarded as confined to the chosen people of Israel. It is true, "Darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the peoples." But even darkness, thick darkness, without moon or stars, may be preparatory to light. It was so at the Creation of the World. It is so in every day experience. If we believe, as believe we must, that man was created with capacities for comprehending the light; if we believe that, in his pure and unfallen state, it was natural for him to love the light; if we believe that his higher nature is never wholly lost: then we must confess that the very darkness in its depth and grossness must have caused longings deep and vast. When men groped in the darkness, and missed their way, and felt they had missed it, they must have longed for the Day Star to arise and shine. They must have said, We were meant for something

better than this. They must have longed for happier times. "They sat in darkness and the shadow of death being fast bound in misery and iron. They fell down and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them from their distress." He in whose heart a longing for better things has arisen, albeit that longing may be indefinite and ill-directed, has not been left unprepared for receiving a gift from God.

But beyond this general preparation of the nations, there was also a special preparation of a particular people. We are entitled to argue this from the condition of that people when the Saviour appeared.

You find that nation scattered all over the world ; though in it, yet not of it. It was disliked and despised. It was persecuted and down-trodden. In most places it was a mere handful. In no place had it the supreme authority. Numbers, educated opinion, popular prejudice, and state power were all against it and its distinctiveness. Yet it was never crushed, and it was never absorbed ; it never ceased to exert power and influence. Low as its fortunes then were, no nation was so proud of its history, none was more hopeful of its future. Indeed it might be said with some truth that at that time the Jews alone had hope. The nations were groaning, as they thought, in the pains of dissolution. Old institutions and old religions were worn out. Men's hearts were failing them for fear, and for looking for those things which were coming upon the earth. The Jews

alone hoped for the coming of new and better times. The Jews alone thought that the pains they were suffering were not pains of dissolution, but birth-pangs, the pains followed by new life and fresh joy.

And then mark this, for the fact is most important, the Jew's hope is essentially religious. His religion is his distinguishing characteristic. Language, Independence, Fatherland, all these he has lost; but the Jew and his religion have been welded together in the hot furnace of affliction. From the times of Antiochus Epiphanes that furnace, though heated seven times more than it is wont, is unable to separate them. No other religion has, at the time of our Lord's Birth, any power whatsoever over educated men, or indeed more than a superstitious power over the uneducated. It is a strange contrast. Just when the heathen have outgrown their religion and are casting it away as a childish thing, the Jews grow up to their religion and embrace it as a Rule of Faith and Life. Whilst the heathen gods are being resolved into mythical heroes, personifications of ideas or of the powers of nature, by the disintegrating process of the thought of the age; the Jew is realizing the presence and the power of the One supreme Personal God wherever his lot is cast.

Nor can we wonder at this difference of feeling when we compare the Jewish and heathen religions together. There is, though some deny it, a difference of kind, not merely of degree. According to the one, the nature of God is spiritual and unique. According to the others, it is material, not distinguished from the nature of man. In the one Morality and Religion are

inseparable, in the other they are not even united. The one claims to mould the affections and desires, the other hardly claims to control the outward life. In these and in other respects, the contrast between the religions of the Jew and of the Gentile at the coming of our Lord is most remarkable. We are compelled to inquire under what special influences the Jew had been.

Nor need we make the comparison at one particular time. To this day the Jewish nation holds a unique position amongst the families of the earth. From the Babylonish captivity onwards, it has exercised a subtle influence over all with whom it has come in contact. It was when its political independence was lost for ever, it was when a period of exile and dispersion had begun, it was when many national glories had been obscured and many national hopes had been disappointed, that this influence began to be felt. Compare the influence of the Jew with that of his Babylonian conqueror. Nebuchadnezzar was indeed a great king, of a higher class than the Eastern conquerors who had gone before him. He grasped the idea of empire as none had grasped it. He could construct as well as destroy. Notwithstanding, his empire lasted only seventy years, and his great city Babylon has long ago been ruinous heaps. He has left a name behind him, and he is not without a monument, for nine-tenths of the bricks which mark the ruins of Babylon are marked with his name. The nation which he destroyed has survived him, and it is not a mere survival, it has vigorous life. The stone cut out without hands, has become a great mountain, and

has filled the whole earth. If you want a fitting memorial of the Jewish nation, you will find it, not in a ruin, but in the hearts and minds of men. The noblest of the thoughts which influence the world for good are marked with the stamp of the Jew.

What is the secret of his influence? It has to be searched for. It is as unique as the influence itself. We can judge of Jews only as individuals ; they have long since ceased to have a corporate existence. But what is there in a Jew to have made him so influential? There is the influence of affection, but the Jew has been mostly hated, he has been rarely loved. There is the influence of sympathy, but a marked feature in the Jew's character has been his exclusiveness. There is the influence of numbers, but the Jews have only been a handful among the nations of the earth. There is the influence of wide-spread dominion, but the Jewish kingdom never ranked amongst the great world-kingsdoms, and it was just when the Jewish kingdom was destroyed that the Jewish influence began to be felt. The Jews have not won our respect by the force of their arms, they have never been a great military power. They have undoubtedly commercial instincts, but they have never been a great commercial power. In our own days and in modern times, money has been a source of Jewish influence, but the true influence of the Jew is wholly unconnected with this. The Jews have not compelled us to read their books by the force of their reasoning. If we may venture on the paradox, the greatest of thoughts have proceeded forth from among them, and yet they have not been great thinkers. Why

then should the influence of the Jew be thus deep and wide? He does not love, and he is not loved, he is not universally respected, he has never had wide-spread dominion, he has never been mighty in battle, he has never been powerful in reasoning, and yet he has a subtle force by which he rules over the nations. He lends to many nations and does not borrow of them.

Our astonishment at this influence is increased when we consider the nations cognate in race, neighbouring in position, or similar in circumstance. The Moabites and Edomites were cousins to the Israelites. What have the nations of the world learnt from them? The Philistines and Syrians were their masters in war. What thought of Philistine or Syrian still fills the hearts of men? The Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians regarded them with contempt, but now the histories of these nations are interesting to us chiefly in their connexion with Jewish history. The religion of the Phœnician and the Canaanite fascinated the Israelite more than his own, but where are the Gods of Tyre and Sidon? Plainly we have here not a comparison but a contrast. The stock produced one plant—a noble vine, all the other shoots were worthless. The Bible lands produced the harvest of one great nation. Of the rest the mower filleth not his hand, neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom.

Beyond this it may be fairly argued that Israel has been influential in spite of herself. No doubt she made proselytes, but the spirit of the nation was not as a whole proselytising. She had no propaganda for bringing the nations of the world to the knowledge of the

true God. Rather her desire was to keep her own God to herself. She had her own covenanted blessings, and she did not wish to share them with others. The spirit of the Jew must be admitted to have been narrow, though his teaching was world-wide. Israel did not regard herself as the little leaven leavening the whole lump, but rather as the wheat amongst the chaff. If the other nations of the world are to be gathered in, they are gathered not to the Jews' arms, but to the Jews' feet. If he makes a league with them, they are to become hewers of wood and drawers of water in the congregation of the Lord.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that the influence of the Jew is exerted through that Book which is his own, his own and no other's, the Old Testament Scriptures. That Book would be the greatest in the whole world, were it not for that other Book, itself the work of Jews, which claims to be its development and fulfilment. There is no important book which is so national, that is to say which is so closely connected with a nation's life and history. There is no book which has been less influenced by foreign thought. A book often expresses the thoughts of a man; this Book, or rather this library of Books, expresses the thoughts of a nation. And yet the Canon is not like the net which includes the good and bad alike. It is the book of the Jew, but of the Jew at his best, or rather it is the book of the Israelite indeed in whom is no guile. There is no parallel instance of a nation's influence being exerted through a book. The influence of the Mahommedans has been very great, but their weapon

was not the Koran but the sword. The Jew's influence is exerted through his Book and his Book alone.

The force of this will be the more evident when we observe how Christians of all ages have been able to separate between the Jew and his Book. The Jewish Book in its two volumes, they have accepted, revered, and loved. They have made it their rule of life. But the Jew has been disliked, despised, and persecuted. We saw the Jews were the only valuable shoot from the stock, we see further that their Book is the only valuable fruit of the plant.

The history of the Old Testament Canon gives us a sufficient reason for this. We find that the Old Testament, in one sense so exclusively the Jew's own, is in another and most real sense not his own. The Old Testament is not so much a Jewish product, as a force acting upon Jews. It is not so much an expression of Jewish thought, as a power which moulds and develops Jewish thought. The great Hebrew teachers are men of the Hebrew race, but they are the depositaries, the communicators of truths strange to the minds of the people at large, and not accepted by them without many a painful struggle.⁽¹⁾

An instructive contrast might here, I think, be drawn between the growth of the British Constitution and the growth of the Old Testament Canon. The points of similarity are many. Both are the most remarkable products of nations separated from the rest of the world. What was once said of the Jews might be said of the English : they dwell alone. What the desert and the mountains and the sea, enforced by the com-

mands of God, did for the Jew, the sea alone has done for us. Both again are the products of many minds and the growth of many ages. Both have escaped destructive codifications and re-arrangements. Later developments and original elements exist side by side.

If we wish to express the principle on which the growth of the British Constitution proceeded, we cannot do it better than by the words "Internal Development." The old order has changed, giving place to new, but the change for the most part has been gradual. It has not been the change of Revolution, but a change analogous to human growth. We have not built upon the ruins of the past, but upon its foundations. We have always refused to begin afresh. Renovation and Restoration have been our watchwords. Our institutions have been born, not made. Their continuance and vitality has not depended upon individual power, but on general consent. A remarkable and significant exception may be noticed. The Commonwealth depended upon Cromwell, and fell with his death.

As a consequence of this, the great men of our nation have not been head and shoulders taller than their contemporaries. They have been products of the age in which they lived. They represented its spirit, they were able to interpret its wishes, they were able to put into shape and form the indefinite thoughts of many minds. You could not separate them from the nation, they were an essential part of it, its cream rising to the surface by a natural law. They worked from within rather than from without. In them the

germs of the thought of the age found their most fruitful expression. From them came the seed from which the harvest of the future was destined to spring. Hence it has come to pass that the British Constitution is essentially a British product. It is the result of years of cultivation in a certain soil. Soil and product are fitted to one another. It may be imitated, but it can hardly be transplanted. Where you take the plant you must also take the soil.

The principle which regulated the growth of Israel's great product—the Old Testament Canon—was a different one. It was not "Internal Development." Every page of Old Testament history shews us that Israel was always under an external influence, against which she repeatedly rebelled. The prophets of the nation are head and shoulders above their contemporaries. They are not the mouth-pieces of their generation ; they are not the product of their age. On the contrary, "the Canonical Prophets stand opposed to the Israelitish people, and the people on their part stand opposed to them."² True there were prophets who interpreted the nation's wishes and spake after the nation's heart. These are honoured by the people, because they find themselves, as it were, reflected in the addresses and predictions. But the Canonical Prophets denounce these men as false deceivers, and history confirms the truth of their denunciations. So then we see the history of Israel and of Israel's Book is not a history of a development from within, but of an education from without. The prophets are the teachers of unpopular truths. They do not watch the signs of the times, that they may first

utter the cry which many are ready to repeat. They teach the lessons which their nation needs, not those which their nation wishes. They do not float to office upon the tide of popular opinion, they stem the tide. They claim to have received their commission not from below but from above. They do not think out the truths they announce; these are revealed to them, such is their invariable conviction, by God. Jehovah uncovers their ear. Jehovah reveals to them His secrets in visions or in dreams. They speak, but not their own word and not out of their own heart.

"Hebrew prophecy," says one (Kuenen) of the modern critical school, "is something quite peculiar, just as peculiar, for instance, as the Greek philosophy." "The envoys of Jehovah among the Israelites afford a spectacle unique in the history of antiquity." Even amongst other Semitic nations the prophet, if he exists, is but a copy of the Hebrew type. Mohammed, the prophet of God, "was formed under Jewish influence, and was acquainted with the writings of the Hebrew prophets."⁽³⁾

And if the Hebrew prophets are a unique institution they must be confessed to have exerted unique power. The secret of that influence is a subject of dispute. On the nature of that influence very different opinions are held. But on the fact itself there is no difference of opinion at all. To quote our modern critic again: "In high estimation of their aim and their work all are agreed."⁽⁴⁾ And once more, "In all quarters their names are mentioned with reverence and admiration. While an acquaintance with the great men of classical

antiquity remains confined to the more highly educated—Samuel and Elijah, Isaiah and Jeremiah, are familiarly known in all circles of the Christian community. A high rank is assigned to them, a great and permanent importance is attributed to their work, by all without distinction.” And indeed it is almost impossible to over-estimate the influence of the prophets on the morals, the politics, and religion of their people. They are not teachers of the closet, but of the market place. Their voice sounds not in the desert, but at the city gate. In many a national crisis they are the leaders in action, in every crisis they are the leaders in counsel. No question could be solved without the prophet’s aid. Their advice was often rejected. Whose advice, however good, is always taken? But their advice was always asked. Their influence was so great that spurious imitations were unable to shake it. False prophets were at times plentiful, prophecy was a trade, prophetic utterances were falsified, prophetic utterances could be bought and sold. There was no sharp line of distinction by which the true and the false could be distinguished from one another. There was not (has there ever been?) an infallible touchstone of truth within reach. But the Hebrew nation knew nevertheless that the true prophet had a rare power, even though they could not always discern him from his counterfeit. Though deceived, though disappointed, they still turned to the prophet to inquire of him. Inquiring of him, they believed that they were inquiring of God. Look at the Jews, in the agony of the destruction of their city and temple, in the despair of the Babylonian exile,

buoyed up by the false hopes excited by false prophets. The power of the true prophet is marvellously attested then.

And when the prophets ceased to appear it was felt that certain questions would have to remain unsolved. Their solution was put off till "the true and faithful prophet" should arise.⁽⁵⁾ For the deficiency was only temporary, as they believed. It was only for certain days that the nation would "abide without a prophet." The time would come when the nation would say, as in fact it did say, "A great prophet hath risen up amongst us, and God hath visited his people."

The prophet had then, as all allow, a powerful influence in shaping the counsel, and in determining the action of the people of his time. The emergency came, the want was felt, the prophet appeared with his advice, his warning, or his encouragement. But it is important to notice that though his word was the word for the moment, there was nothing else momentary about it. His word was opportune, but he was not an opportunist. The crisis passed away, but the prophetic word remained. The prophet was not a dealer in make-shifts, he was not a cunning deviser of expedients. Rather he was the sworn foe of such. He was the man to denounce a tempting alliance, which would relieve the pressure of the time by laying up ruin for future generations. He was the man to denounce the weakness which wore the garb of prudence. He was also the man boldly to counsel submission when resistance could only make the ruin more complete. The true statesman, so unlike the modern counterfeit, he did

not set himself to discern and to carry out the popular wish, but he set himself boldly to oppose and to put down the popular sins.

His advice was always based on principles, and so it had a permanent value. Hence it came to pass that the prophets form a continuous line; they are not isolated points in the history of the nation. Each in his turn takes up his predecessor's word or work. Each in his turn prepares the way for his successor. The prophet is taken up to heaven, but his mantle falls on his disciple, and his work goes on, and is enlarged.

And yet it could not be said that the prophets hung by one another, that they played into one another's hands. They had, indeed, no motive so to do. Theirs was not a succession of natural descent like the succession of the Aaronic priesthood; they had not to be careful for the glories of their family. Theirs was not a succession of spiritual descent, like the succession of the Christian priesthood; they had not to be zealous for the privileges of their order. A prophetic caste there may have been, but the great prophets do not seem to have belonged to it; some of the great prophets expressly distinguish themselves from it. No; their succession was a succession based on principle, a succession of teaching, a succession of thought. The principles were true, and so the prophetic words were lasting. The principles were fruitful, and so new developments were possible. Progress was ever being made, and it was progress founded upon and consistent with the past. Progress seemed ever possible. Each step gained, enlarged the prospect, heightened the aim.

No apology could be needed at any time, certainly none could be needed at this present time, for taking as a subject of Hulsean Lectures, The work and influence of the Hebrew prophet. The relations of the Hebrew prophet to the past, the present, and the future of his nation, to its history and its law, its hopes and its promises, are the great questions of modern Biblical criticism.

As we have seen, a great reputation is denied them by none. Nay, modern critics add jewels to their crown. The prophet, as portrayed by modern critics, is a greater marvel than a prophet of the traditional type. They refuse him, indeed, that which has commonly been regarded as his peculiar office. He is no longer a predictor of the future. But they do not contract his sphere or lessen his power. When they deny him all insight into the future, they compensate for it by giving him unlimited power of creating the past. He is not the foreteller of future events, but he is the moralist, he is the law-giver, he is the novelist, he is the historian of his nation, all in one.⁽⁶⁾

The prophet, it seems, has no divine code of law to which to appeal, and by which he may enforce the lessons he is pressing upon the nation's conscience. He compiles one. Men have been accustomed to speak of the Law and the Prophets, they have been accustomed to regard the Law as the Divine foundation of all prophetic teaching. They have thought it the Prophet's duty to enforce that law, to interpret it, to apply it to present circumstances, to spiritualize its formal ordinances. But this, it appears, is a mistake. This does the prophets scant

justice. No such subordinate task can be assigned them. For the phrase "the Law and The Prophets" must be substituted "The Prophets and The Law." The Law sprang out of the Prophetic teaching, and was in part, at least, the composition of Prophets.⁽⁷⁾

The Prophet has, we are further told, no historical foundation for his teaching. He has the genius to create one. When the noble thoughts arise in the Prophet's mind, they do not come from meditating upon his nation's glorious history. On the contrary, that history is in large measure the hypostatizing of his ideas. The history is the objective form in which he clothes his teaching. He is, of course, well acquainted with the various traditions concerning the history of his nation. He has also a few historical fragments in writing. These are all his materials. He pieces his fragments together. What is wanting his creative fancy supplies. He writes his view of the history of Israel and God's relations with Israel into them. He uses his materials freely, with the freedom of a novelist rather than the sobriety of a historian. His great aim is to teach his people certain necessary truths; for this purpose he selects, he colours, he creates his facts.⁽⁸⁾

I propose in the other lectures of my course to consider some of the great difficulties which attend this conception of the work of the Hebrew Prophet and of the composition of the Old Testament. It may be truly said, I think, that this modern critical theory creates more difficulties than it solves. I do not deny that what is called the traditional theory is attended with difficulties, though these have been exaggerated.

I do not propose to consider these, at least directly. I wish to attack the modern theory, and only thus to defend the old.

The modern theory must, of course, be met upon its own ground. But one may freely confess that one's opposition to it is animated by a consideration of its bearing on the New Testament Revelation. This may be regarded as irrational and unscientific, but it is not. The conclusions of one line of thought may be used to correct the conclusions, certainly the hypotheses, of another. New Testament facts may be used to verify theories about the Old Testament.⁽⁷⁾

To return to the thought with which we began ; the modern theory of the Old Testament seems to me to overthrow that preparation for Christ which we saw was at once so beautiful and so necessary. When we have been reading our Old Testament, we have seen,—or did we only think we saw?—a gradual development in God's dealings with the race. The Patriarchal, the Law-giving, the Prophetical ages seemed to follow one another in due course. There was a period of Infancy, when laws were few and simple. There was a period of Youth, when laws were many and to be obeyed for obedience sake. There was a period of Manhood, when principles gradually took the place of laws, when exterior obedience was as nothing except as the fruit of the interior obedience of the heart. But if the traditional theory is, as a whole, a confusion and a mistake ; if the earliest books are the latest, and the latest the earliest ; if the basis of the teaching is in reality the development ; if the spiritual principles came first, and

the formal precepts afterwards ; if first you have the freedom of the man, and then the bondage of the child ; if the facts which teach divine truths more powerfully than words, are only mythical embodiments of those truths : then it must be confessed that the picture of God's dealings in the Old Testament, on which we have so often gazed with admiration and delight, is a creation of human fancy. However beautiful, it is not true. The development of the Old Testament is a stage development, not a development of real life. The record of the life of the human race is not a history, but a romance.

Alas ! to find the footprints of God's presence less certain than we hoped. Alas ! to find the Christ more lonely ; as a consequence we naturally think Him less approachable. By such thoughts we cannot directly oppose critical arguments, but the *a priori* improbability of the theory may be argued by every Christian man. This at least we are entitled to say : The critical theory of the composition of the Old Testament saddens our Christian hopes, for it casts a shadow on Christ our Lord.

EXCURSUS ON LECTURE I.

THE WITNESS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TO THE OLD.

How far do the statements of the New Testament, when regarded as authoritative and decisive, determine the questions of Old Testament criticism? The investigation suggested here is of practical importance. In the New Testament we find quotations from most of the Old Testament Books. The Formulæ of introduction are such that we are able to gather the opinion of the New Testament teachers and writers concerning the books they quote. The quotations are sufficiently numerous to indicate to us how the Old Testament as a whole was regarded by the New Testament writers. The infallibility of the New Testament on matters of doctrine being supposed, we have in it a means of verifying conclusions arrived at on critical principles. The line of argument proposed is fair enough in itself, but great care must be taken not to press it unduly.

This investigation will have little interest or importance to those who deny the inspiration of the New Testament altogether; and the argument will have greater or less force according to the view taken of inspiration. Those who think that the inspiration of a book is not incompatible with grave inaccuracies and mistakes may reckon it to be of little moment.

But the value of the investigation does not depend altogether on the view we take of inspiration. We have to deal not only with the utterances of inspired men, but of our Lord Himself. We must face these questions. How far is it admissible to suppose that any error or mistake, even the slightest, could attach itself to our Lord's teaching? Is it possible that He could have used an unsound argument? Some seem to think that He could have used an argument which He knew to be unsound, but which was valid in the opinion of those to whom it was addressed. But this

would be inconsistent with perfect truthfulness. More commonly it seems to be thought that He might have used an unsound argument or made an erroneous statement in ignorance. For instance, He might in ignorance have used mythical narratives as if they were historically true, or followed the national tradition in ascribing books to authors by whom they could not possibly have been written. It is obvious that we are not here discussing different theories of Inspiration, but the literal, absolute, truth of our Lord's Words.⁽¹⁾

It is admitted, of course, that our Lord accommodated his language to the men of his day, and, indeed, to the men of all time. Every human word, every illustration from earthly things, can be reckoned only as accommodations to the Divine truth they were intended to set forth. All our Lord's reasonings might be called *argumenta ad hominem*. Popular language often ultimately involves mistaken ideas. The names given to things may have their origin in historical or scientific mistakes. The use of such popular language commits no one, unless arguments are based on the false thought involved in the exact form of the expressions or the original derivation of the words. To apply these considerations to the case before us, our Lord might, when quoting books from the Old Testament, have called them by their popular, well-known names, without prejudging the question of their authorship in the smallest degree. Quotations from the books of the Old Testament often derive no greater force from the name of their author than from the number of their chapter and verse. Author's name, chapter and verse, one or both, define the place from which the quotation is made; they may do no more.

But this kind of accommodation differs widely from an *argumentum ad hominem* properly so called—i.e., an argument invalid in itself, but conclusive to the man to whom it is addressed. Would a Biblical scholar think himself justified in founding arguments for a true doctrine on what he knew to be an interpolation in the original text or a false rendering of the Authorized Version? We are told sometimes that the standard of morality amongst Old Testament Prophets is inferior to ours. He would be a bold man

who would dare to say that the moral standard, I will not say of Our Lord, but of the great teacher, Jesus of Nazareth, was inferior to that of Christians of our own day. It is no doubt impossible to draw the line dividing admissible accommodations from inadmissible, our moral sense is not accurate enough or delicate enough; but there is a wide distinction between the simple use of language or expressions theoretically inaccurate in a practical and popular way, and the definite argumentative use of the inaccuracies in words or expressions. We cannot imagine our Lord could have arrived at true conclusions by a process of *suggestio falsi*.

Apart from the morality of accommodations of the latter kind, it is plain that they do much to weaken the influence and usefulness of the teacher who adopts them. Unsound arguments are like inferior work in a great building; they may not touch the foundation, but time finds them out; and then much actual mischief is caused, and suspicion is cast upon the stability of the whole system. Further, a great teacher teaches as much by his methods as by his conclusions. These considerations have a most important and an immediate application to the subject in hand. Our Lord's testimony to the Old Testament Scriptures cannot be confined to the passages which He actually quotes. By His use of the Old Testament He teaches us how to use it. An accommodation on His part, the very foundation of which was an inaccuracy, could not fail to be the cause of error in us His disciples. Could such a misleading accommodation have been used by our Lord?

The application of these principles may be illustrated by examples. Our Lord, when tempted by the Sadducees, answered thus, "And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the Book of Moses how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye, therefore, do greatly err." The argument for the resurrection of the dead here given by our Lord (if sound), implies that God did speak unto Moses in the words recorded, and that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were historical personages. God's own words are

appealed to. Mythical stories could not prove the truth of the Resurrection. Our Lord's words thus imply the objectivity of the vision of the bush and the historical truth of the narrative. Moral considerations, respect for our Lord as a teacher, preclude us from supposing an accommodation in His language here. The Sadducees were blamed for not knowing the Scriptures generally, and more especially this particular Scripture, which taught them the doctrine of the Resurrection. If our Lord's argument was invalid, the blame was unjust. On the other hand, the words "Book of Moses" may only be a formula of quotation, and certainly do not imply of necessity that Moses was the author of Exodus. Our Lord's argument is equally valid whoever the author may be. Another illustration may be drawn from our Lord's use of Ps. cx. 1. The quotation of that Psalm as David's involves an unjustifiable accommodation of language, if David did not write it. The difficulty to the Pharisees was how one and the same man could be David's son and David's Lord. The difficulty had no real existence if David did not write the Psalm.⁽²⁾

We pass on to consider the other supposition by which our Lord's testimony on critical questions is explained away—the supposition of our Lord's ignorance on such matters.

It is often said that on critical questions connected with the Old Testament Revelation our Lord had only the knowledge of His time.⁽³⁾ The statement may be challenged. He certainly did not accept the limits of that Revelation as He found them drawn for Him by the teachers of His people. Amongst the Jews of His time, two co-ordinate authorities concerning the law and will of God were admitted—the Written Law and the Oral Law. Of the two, the latter was regarded with even greater reverence than the former. Our Lord accepted the authority of the one, and said of it, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled." He rejected the other and said, "Ye make the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

But it is argued that our Lord as Man was ignorant of certain things. We know, for He Himself tells us, that He was, in some sense, ignorant of one thing—the Day of Judgment. If ignorant of this He

might be ignorant as to the authorship, date, and exact nature of the books of the Old Testament Canon. If we grant the reasonableness of this deduction, we have still a most important step to take. The analogous case does not help us half-way. We want to find an instance in our Lord's life not merely of ignorance, but of error or mistake. Ignorance does not necessarily cause mistake; it may be inactive and inoperative. Our Lord did not as Man know the Day of Judgment, and He said nothing concerning it. In the case before us it is assumed that our Lord did not know, and actually made mistakes. There is a wide distinction between the two cases.

But further, is teaching one of those offices which are to be predicated of Christ as Man, or was it not rather one of those offices which the Godhead and Manhood co-operated to fulfil? It would be incorrect to call our Lord a human teacher. To the title of Divine Teacher He has every claim. Can we suppose that the Divine Teacher made even the slightest mistake? Would not the Divine Spirit of Truth pervade His human utterances so that no error could be found in them? If so, although we might admit that Christ as Man was ignorant of the authorship or historical truth of certain passages of the Old Testament; yet we should maintain that Christ, the Divine Teacher, could not make an erroneous statement as to the authorship, or use a mythical story as if it were true history.

Another consideration may be added to give force to what has been already stated. Christ, when He was quoting from the Old Testament, was in a peculiar sense taking of His own to give unto us. He was on His own domain, so to speak. The Old Testament was in the truest sense Christ's own book. Jesus of Nazareth was He "of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write." We can see that He understood the Scriptures so thoroughly that, as compared with Him, all the men of His time were but fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken. Could He who knew so well the secrets of the inner chamber have remained ignorant of the outward structure? The two things are closely connected together. The question really is the separation of the accidents of Revelation

from its substance. He who mistakes the accidents for the substance is in great danger of going astray. We come then to this conclusion; Jesus Christ, the Divine Teacher, cannot have been ignorant of the truth concerning the Old Testament Scriptures, and certainly cannot have made a mistake about them. So far as His words are inconsistent with the conclusions of the critics, those conclusions must be false. Here, as always, "Nothing can be truer than the Truth's own word."

The statements of the Apostles, and other Christian teachers, rest on a different footing. We have no reason for alleging that they always used sound arguments or escaped historical inaccuracies. S. Stephen's historical statements, in his speech before the Sanhedrim, may not be always correct. S. Paul's sketch of the history of the chosen people, in the synagogue of Antioch, may comprise popular errors. In these cases Inspiration only guarantees the truth of the record, not the truth of the argument. It has never been said of any Apostle "God giveth not the spirit by measure unto Him." Even in the Epistles the limits of Inspiration cannot be exactly defined.

With these preliminary observations we pass on to consider the actual evidence of the New Testament on critical questions of the Old Testament. Its testimony may be conveniently divided under the heads of Inspiration, Historical Truth, Authorship and Date. A witness to one of these points will often imply a witness to another.

The witness which the New Testament bears to the Inspiration of the Old Testament must be reckoned to have the greatest importance. It *may* be unimportant whether a book is history or myth, written by this man or that. It *cannot* be unimportant whether a book is or is not written by the Inspiration of God.

It is needless to accumulate proofs under this head. The witness is clear and will not be disputed by any. The formulæ of quotation are decisive. From the definite and repeated statements of our Lord and His Apostles we gather that God spake by the mouth of His holy Prophets, that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

It is when we attempt to determine the exact bearing of these testimonies on critical questions that our difficulties begin. It will be admitted by all that the books when written have not been supernaturally preserved from corruption. An inspired book may and does contain errors of scribes, it may contain also considerable interpolations from later hands. The care and fidelity with which the Jews of later times preserved their books is abundantly testified to. The Patristic accusation that the Jews corrupted them for anti-Christian purposes, has no adequate support. But the history of the text of the Pentateuch, supposing it to have been written by Moses, is well nigh a blank for two thousand years. If we were to accept the hypothesis of an original verbal Inspiration, it would still be dangerous to argue for verbal accuracy now. And if we reject that hypothesis, as we may feel compelled to do, then it is impossible for us to draw accurately the line which separates the human and fallible element from the Divine. Some would affirm that Inspiration certified us of the truth of the conclusions, whilst it left undecided the aptness of the illustrations, or the accuracy of statements made by the way. Some would go still further and regard the soundness of the arguments as a matter open to legitimate doubt. Inaccuracies of expression, inaccuracies of detail, mistakes in fact, errors in doctrine,—these glide the one into the other. Who can give us a formula which will include this and exclude that? The limits of possible error may be as hard to define as the limits of moderation, but this throws no doubt on their reality. We are not, of course, competent judges concerning the methods of Divine Revelation, but it is difficult to imagine how Divine Teaching can be conveyed in the form of unsound conclusions and reasonings on false grounds. The analogy of God's dealings disposes us to believe that He regards not only the end we reach, but the way by which we reach it. Divine Teaching is intended to recommend the truth to us, but false arguments are stumbling blocks to its reception. It is the function of teachers sent by God to remove stumbling blocks out of the way of His people,

For the most part questions of Authorship and Date are undetermined by testimonies to Inspiration. The Inspiration of a book does not generally depend on the truth of any particular theory with respect to these. God speaks to us through a Psalm whether it be Davidic or Maccabean. Prophetical books may be wrongly ascribed to their traditional authors, and may yet be full of Divine Teaching. Genesis may be an inspired record of the early history of the race, even if Ezra had the greatest share in its composition. The breathings of the Spirit of God may be traced in Isaiah 40—66, even though the author be an unknown writer of the Babylonish Captivity. If Genesis has been falsely ascribed to Moses, and Isaiah 40—66 to Isaiah, the *bona fides* of their authors remains unimpugned. These writings do not claim to be the utterances of any particular man, they are practically anonymous.

But if a book purports to be the writing of some particular man; if such claim is not confined to titles which might have been added by some editor, or to a few isolated sentences which might have been the interpolation of some scribe; if it forms an integral part of the book and a principal cause of its authority: then the Inspiration of the book does seem to determine its Authorship. No end, however good, can justify the use of unfair means. No man has a right to assume another's name in order to support the best of causes. The book whose writing and publication we cannot justify on moral principles, can hardly have been written by the inspiration of God.

The above considerations have an important bearing on the authorship of the Book Deuteronomy. That book claims over and over again to be the record of Moses' own words and to be written by Moses himself. Moses is represented as saying, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it." There can be no doubt that the author, if not Moses, wished men to believe that he was Moses. If he was not, though his end was good, and his weapon was good, his method was morally bad; for he wished to deceive.

Of this book Kuenen says, "An author of the seventh century B.C. has made Moses himself proclaim that which in his opinion

it was expedient in the real interests of the Mosaic party to announce and introduce. Men used to perpetrate such fictions as these without any qualms of conscience.”⁽³⁾

Possibly so, but the question before us is not whether men, and good men, act immorally, but whether they are divinely inspired in that immoral act. Does the Inspiration of God lead them, and give them the power, to perpetrate fictions? The use of Moses' name and authority in this book was not mere literary drapery, a transparent fiction which could deceive no one. On the contrary, Moses' name is introduced to give the book a power which otherwise it would not have had. The writer uses it to deceive King Josiah and the Jewish people into doing what he thought necessary for their good. On strict moral principles, the book Deuteronomy, if not written by Moses, is an unjustifiable deception. This is admitted by all. It may be apologised for, but cannot be defended. It is said that it was a most important crisis, and that the morality of the time on such matters was not so high and pure as our own. All this may be true, but it is beside the question, is this defective morality compatible with inspiration? Could a forged weapon have proceeded from the armoury of God? The testimonies to the inspiration of Deuteronomy in the New Testament are clear and decisive. Our Lord Himself quotes it with the formula “It is written.” It is the sword of the Spirit with which He repels the assaults of the Tempter. Is it possible that our Lord's chosen weapon can have had a forged mark upon it, and a mark placed with intent to deceive?

Much of the above argument may be applied also to the book of Daniel. That book claims Daniel for its author in the most unequivocal terms. That book is also, on the critical theory, a forgery. Its purpose, no doubt, was good and pious, but it was none the less a forgery for that. The direct testimony of the New Testament to the book Daniel is found in one passage only, and it would perhaps be unfair to argue that one quotation authenticates a whole book. Our Lord uses a phrase taken from it with the formula, “Spoken by Daniel the prophet.” We may gather from this that the historical, as distinct from the mythical Daniel,

was a prophet, and that some of his prophecies are contained in the Canonical Book which bears his name. Perhaps we can do more.

The second point concerning the Old Testament Scriptures which the New Testament teachers and writers seem to guarantee to us is, The general truth of its historical narratives. They may be said to do this in two ways: (1) Indirectly, by their testimony to the inspiration of the Old Testament; (2) Directly, by assuming the truth of certain Old Testament facts, and making them a foundation for New Testament doctrines.

The indirect testimony of the New Testament on this point has been already considered. Clear in itself, it is doubtful in its application. But we may surely say that inspiration guarantees to us the general truth of a narrative which claims to be history, and is intended to be regarded as history. There is no difficulty in admitting that myths may be the vehicles of Divine teaching; but there is a great difficulty in believing that myths composed for the purpose of giving a nation a false idea of their past, and of their relations to their God, can give them a true idea of their present condition, and their duty in the days to come.

With respect to the direct testimony of the New Testament to the Old Testament narratives, its force is not always ascertainable. Some of the historical allusions may be mere setting. Illustrations from a myth may be just as suitable as illustrations from history. On the other hand, the historical truth of numerous events recorded in the Old Testament is assumed by our Lord and His Apostles and made the basis of their arguments. In these cases an authoritative decision seems to be given. It is the Pentateuchal history which is most constantly referred to. We could draw from the New Testament the main features of the history of the Patriarchs and the chosen people in Egypt and the desert. The allusions to the history of the Judges and of the divided kingdoms are rare.

Some at least of the critical conclusions are directly contradicted by testimonies under this head. When our Lord says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it

and was glad," we can no longer doubt that Abraham, *i.e.*, the Abraham of the Old Testament history, is not a personification but a person. When he quotes Exodus iii. 22, we are certified, as we have seen, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are real persons. Kuenen, however, investigates the question "whether the progenitors of Israel and of the neighbouring nations who are represented in Genesis, are historical personages." And he answers this question in the negative.⁽⁴⁾

There may be some who would decline to admit that S. Paul's use of the story of Abraham's two sons in the Epistle to the Galatians, S. Peter's allusion to Balaam's wages, S. James's reference to the prayers of Elias, certify to us the historic truth of the narratives referred to. It would be difficult, however, to give a meaning to Hebrews xi., if the persons and events referred to there are unhistorical. Examples of faith and patience must be real men or they are not examples at all. The great cloud of witnesses which is represented as compassing us about, cannot have come from cloud-land. A mythical hero might have crept in, and a mythical event have been commemorated, in that chapter, without affecting the author's reasoning. But it is not unfair to say that on the critical theory, *all* the heroes are heroes of romance, and *all* the particular events mentioned are unhistorical. Is this compatible with any theory of Inspiration?

We pass on to our third head,—The testimonies of the New Testament with respect to the authorship and date of the books of the Old Testament.

We may at once confess that the New Testament evidence under this head is meagre, and is perhaps even more meagre than it seems. The New Testament adds nothing, or almost nothing, to the statements found in the Old Testament. Anonymous books remain anonymous. And when the books of the Old Testament are quoted in the name of their traditional authors, it would certainly be unfair to assume that the New Testament teachers thereby set their seal on that tradition. A book is quoted under the name it commonly bears and ascribed to its reputed author by men who elsewhere definitely reject the traditional authorship.

The history of the Canon of the New Testament sufficiently proves this. It would be most dangerous to argue that all the Psalms quoted under the name of David were written by him. The book of Moses need not be the book written by Moses; it may simply be the book containing his laws and institutions and the record of his life and work. In other cases the mention of the particular prophet's name may have no force. It may be made for the sake of reference.

Nevertheless, there are some definite decisions with respect to authorship given by the New Testament writers. As we have seen already, our Lord ascribes most definitely the authorship of Psalm 110 to David. His testimony to the connexion between Moses and the Pentateuch seems of the greatest importance. We admit at once that nowhere in the New Testament is Moses stated to be the author of the Pentateuch. Nevertheless we find that Moses was an author (Joh. v. 46); and that his connection with the Law was so close that he might be said to be its giver (Joh. vii. 19). Certain precepts of the Law are definitely attached to his name. The three codes of the critical school are all represented. Our Lord ascribes to Moses;—(1) the law denouncing the punishment of death against him who cursed his father and mother (Mark vii. 10). This forms part of the code of the book of the Covenant (Ex. xxi. 17). (2) The Law on Divorce (Matt. xix. 7, 8.) This forms part of the Deuteronomic code (Deut. xxiv. 1.) (3) The law of the leper's offering (Matt. viii. 4). This forms part of the Levitical code (Lev. xiv. 3, 4, 10). Laws ascribed to these three codes are thus reckoned by Him to be alike Mosaic. The writers of the New Testament follow our Lord in their description of the relations between Moses and the Pentateuch.

We come then to this conclusion here. Although the authorship of the Pentateuch is not ascribed to Moses in the New Testament, he is nevertheless regarded as the originator of the Law. Others may have written his laws down for him, but from him or through him they originally came. The view taken by

our Lord of Moses, so far as it is ascertained, agrees perfectly with the traditional view of the composition of the Pentateuch. It is utterly inconsistent with the critical theory.

We may sum up our conclusions on the whole question thus :

Some critical questions are decided for us by the New Testament dicta. The decisions are always in favour of the traditional, and always opposed to the critical theory. They embrace matters of great importance ; notably, the Mosaic character of the Pentateuch and the Law ; the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy (by implication at least) ; and the general historic truth of the early narrative.

On the other hand the greater number of critical questions are left undecided by the New Testament statements ; so far as it is concerned, we may hold what view we please. Under this head we may place the Mosaic authorship of the first four books of the Pentateuch, the date of the book Job, the authorship of Ecclesiastes ; possibly also, the date of the book Daniel, and the authorship of Isaiah 40—66. We may have strong opinions on these points also, but they will rest on other grounds than the statements of our Lord and His Apostles.

It may be remarked, however, that, if Moses wrote Deuteronomy, and if the Law is essentially his, the whole critical theory falls to the ground. Two of its fundamental points are, that the Deuteronomic code did not exist before Josiah's time ; and that, beyond the ten commandments, Moses did not in any sense give Israel a law.

LECTURE II.

THE PROPHETS AND THE HISTORY.

“We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.”—*Psalm* xliv. 1.

The tradition of the Jewish Church ascribes the five books called the Pentateuch to Moses. Through Moses, she believed, came to her the record of the early days of the history of the world and of the race. By Moses was compiled the narrative of the lives of the fathers of the chosen people. Through him was given the law of God to Israel, and he himself wrote it down. He, as an eye-witness, recorded the oppression in Egypt, the marvellous deliverance, the forty years' wanderings,—in short the history of the nation from its infancy until it reached the promised land.

To Moses the Children of Israel owed a debt which it is difficult to exaggerate. His doings on their behalf were marvellous. He delivered them from Egypt, he led them through the desert. By him God made them a nation. It was not permitted to him to see the fruit of his labours, but when he died, the final triumph was secure, for the enemy's heart failed him for fear. Israel had only to go in and possess the goodly land. And this was not the most valuable part of his work; Moses was greater in word than in deed. The book of history and law which he left behind him

formed a wide and firm foundation for Israel's national and religious life. He had impressed indelibly on their heart that God had chosen them from all the nations of the earth to be a peculiar people unto Himself; thus he gave them a place in the world, a reason for their existence. He had given them a complete code of laws, relating to their political, moral, and religious duties; thus he taught them how to live, and how to fill their place in the world. He could not have done more for them. He gave them independence, he gave them a country, he gave them a history, he gave them a law, he promised them a future. They had only to be obedient to God's law, they had only to be faithful to the principles implanted in their hearts, and then the words would be fulfilled, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and the sword of thy excellency. Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

Such is the tradition of the Jewish Church on the work of Moses. The modern critics make a great change here. They add to the reputation of the later prophets, but they displace Moses from his pre-eminent position. It is difficult to say how much of Moses' doings is left to him. We have, they think, no authentic, contemporary, or trustworthy record. No doubt his *work* is still regarded as great, but he is wholly deprived of his *writings*. Instead of the authorship of five books, he must content himself with the authorship of ten words. Kuenen say, "Certainly nothing more was committed to writing by him or in

his time than the ten words in their original form.”⁽¹⁾ Who then was the author? or rather who were the authors of the Pentateuch? When was it written? It will be well to state a modern theory (Kuenen’s) in its complete form.⁽²⁾

Seven centuries after the Exodus, the Pentateuch (the history and the law alike) remained unwritten. The people of Israel preserved the memories of the founders of their race, their captivity in Egypt, their wanderings in the desert, their settlement in Canaan, in a traditional shape. The tradition was not exact. It had been exaggerated, embellished, in part even created, by the exercise of their imagination. All oral tradition in process of time is corrupted and becomes unhistorical, but the Israelites had a peculiarity which made their tradition unhistorical in a remarkable degree. They were wont to make history repeat itself. The fathers of the race, such was their belief, possessed the qualities and lived in miniature the lives of their descendants. So the historical facts of any age cast their shadows behind them. The tradition reproduced them in the history of the patriarchs. The history of the Past was not closed, but was always receiving fresh additions. Such were the heterogeneous materials of various ages and authority, partly historical, largely imaginative, and all traditional, out of which the narrative of the Pentateuch was compiled.

From the eighth century B.C. and onwards, prophets arose whose characteristics were an intense conviction of the high destiny of their nation, a purer conception of truth, and an earnest desire to enforce it upon the people at large. One of them, about 750 B.C., we do not know his name, re-wrote the history of his nation, or rather worked up the various traditions into a homogeneous whole. He did not concern himself with moral laws or religious ceremonies. History was the weapon he preferred to use. He needed a guiding thought for his work, and the motive with which he undertook it supplied him with one. His own sure belief was that Jehovah had chosen Israel from all the nations of the earth. With this one thought, he was able to bring order out of

chaos, and unity out of diversity. He pieced all his fragmentary materials so perfectly that for 2,500 years no one was able to find his joinings. He used up his materials so completely that he left no trace of any other tradition behind. This wonderful artist hid himself behind his own picture, it is said, so his name did not live as it should have done in the grateful memory of his people. And yet it is plain that to no one did the nation owe a greater debt, for it was he who made Israel's calling and election sure.

More than a century later, and about 620 B.C., the second volume of the Pentateuch was written. During the reign of Manasseh, the prophets had felt something was wanted for the successful accomplishment of their work—the preservation of the true worship of Jehovah. They had no divine law on which to base their exhortations. They were unable to enforce truths, on which, as they believed, the national existence depended. Experience had shewn that the Israelites were prone to idolatry, and it had further shewn that the worship of the high places promoted idolatry. The prophets were convinced that idolatry could not be rooted out if the worship of the high places was tolerated. They felt they were not strong enough to carry through such a sweeping reform on their own authority. They must appeal to the authority of the founder of the nation. With this purpose our book Deuteronomy, with its law of the one sanctuary, was written. The writer, also unknown, (but he may have been Jeremiah, or, if not, Jeremiah was an accomplice) was a prophet “of priestly descent or at least with priestly sympathies.” His teaching was spiritual, but he intermixed with it precepts of a formal character. He put his ordinances into the mouth of Moses himself. He evidently wished it to be supposed that Moses was the author of the work. This work, purporting to be the work of Moses, had to be recognised as such by the nation at large. During Josiah's reign an opportunity occurred. The book was found, not accidentally, by Hilkiah the High Priest, in the house of the Lord. It was taken to the king and read in his ears. It was accepted by him as an authentic copy of the ancient law. It was enforced by his royal authority. It became the basis of his reformation. Almost by a single stroke of the pen, the whole theory of Jewish worship

was changed. A few years later the writer incorporated it, and sundry additions, with the book of history written a century before, and then the second edition of the Pentateuch was complete.

We cannot approve of the means used by the writers of these two editions of the Pentateuch, but their objects were praiseworthy. They sought to enforce upon their people deep spiritual truths. The same can hardly be said of Ezra, who, 170 years later than the author of Deuteronomy, completed the Pentateuch by bringing out its third edition. The first editor was a prophet, and his aim was purely spiritual; the second was a prophet with sacerdotal tendencies; but Ezra was a priest whose first object was to increase the power of his order. This only can be said for him; when he subjected the people to the priests, he was, as he believed, subjecting them to God.

The priests had not been satisfied with the Deuteronomic legislation, partly sacerdotal though it was. It gave the sons of Aaron no superiority over the other sons of Levi. It did not prescribe with sufficient definiteness religious observances. To rectify these defects, Ezra arranged and shaped the priestly narratives and laws. He added his work, which contained about half our present Pentateuch, to the second edition. Under Nehemiah, a friendly governor, it was bound upon the heart and conscience of the people for ever.

Such is one of the latest theories of the composition of the Pentateuch. When we come to examine the evidence for it, we find that it rests mainly on historical evidence derived from books of the Old Testament. It is, in fact, a theory invented to account for certain phenomena in the history of the Jewish nation. The line of argument followed by the modern of Old Testament critics has changed somewhat of late years. The linguistic argument has no longer the foremost place. It has been superseded to

some extent by the argument from history. The change may be welcomed, as it renders the controversy somewhat more intelligible. Arbitrary assertions, though not less possible, are more easily exposed. In the linguistic controversy definite conclusions could hardly be hoped for. The materials were too meagre. Contemporary helps there were none. The Old Testament in more senses than one stands as a book by itself. Little light can be thrown upon its language and date beyond that which it throws upon itself. The same is no doubt true, in some measure, of the laws and history of the Old Testament. Still modern discoveries and ancient history help us here. Moreover the arguments turn on principles of human nature and national progress which do not change. Thus the controversy has to a considerable extent ceased to be a controversy for experts. The arguments may be understood by those who are not Hebrew Scholars. One advantage, at least, results from this. The controversy will be carried on in the light. It is not pleasant to be instructed by voices from the dark.

In the present lecture I propose to consider the critical theory on the relation of the prophets to the history of their nation. We may sharply distinguish it from the traditional theory thus: *On the traditional theory Jewish history consists of facts on which the prophetic teaching is based; on the critical theory it is largely composed of myths in which the prophetic teaching is embodied.*

It may be well at the outset to emphasise the distinction here made. It is not a mere distinction of

words. It utterly changes the value of the Old Testament history, and the character of the Old Testament revelation. If the Old Testament narrative is true history, then, and then only, is it an account of God's dealings with men; then, and then only, is it a revelation of God's nature and of God's will concerning us.

Moreover, the proverb, "Actions speak louder than words," is true even in the sphere of divine revelation. God's lessons are taught us by His actions and His dealings with men, more forcibly and more lastingly than by His words. A declaration of love or justice, may be heard with delight or awe; but a deed of love or justice pierces home to the heart. A deed has more of objectivity, more of reality to mankind than a word. To us who live under the New Testament dispensation the thought is familiar. We reckon it one of the peculiar glories of Christianity, that it is a historical religion. What is the foundation of Christianity, but the Divine life of the Son of Man? What in the main are the Articles of the Christian faith, but facts in that Life? The doctrines of Christianity are the necessary conclusions from those historical facts. Once prove those facts to be mere myths, and Christianity becomes a dream—a beautiful dream, no doubt, but an unreal, unsubstantial dream.

Besides this, a deed appeals to a wider circle of learners than a word. The lesson embodied in a word is understood by one nation; but it is limited, it may be distorted, by that nation's language. The difficulty of translation must be faced and surmounted before other nations can share in it. And at the

best we have only a translation of a translation ; first, the translation of the divine thought into a human word ; next, the translation of one human word into another. On the other hand, the language of deeds is cosmopolitan. The lessons taught us by deeds are understood without translation the whole world through.

Further, a deed has more sides than a word. You may regard it from different points of view. It may be the source of many and various thoughts. The meaning of a great deed is not readily exhausted. Dealing with words only, you deal with things in the same plane. But when you come to deeds, you pass outside the plane and raise the number of your dimensions. We may take, as illustrations, the facts which centre round the Manger of Bethlehem and the Cross of Calvary. Do not these mean infinitely more than any one, be he an inspired Apostle, has *said* about them ?

We come then from *a priori* considerations to this conclusion : if God, under the Old Testament dispensation, wished to reveal Himself in the most forcible and permanent way ; if He wished to teach the nations as well as the chosen people ; if He wished to teach infinite truths whose meaning could never be exhausted : He would be likely to use, not mere words, but deeds as well. The record of His dealings would be more precious than even the words of His mouth. In support of this we have, as we have seen, the analogy of the New Testament.

It is, then, to the history of the Old Testament that we naturally turn for our widest, our most complete, our most Divine revelations concerning God under the Old Testament dispensation. We find in a deed somewhat more of the infinite, less of the finite. The deed appeals to mankind; the word, till it is adapted, only to a nation. The sacred historian is thus, if he is faithful, a true prophet, because a true interpreter of God to men. This truth the Jews grasped when they reckoned their historians amongst the prophets. He who recorded God's dealings revealed God's mind not less clearly than He who spake God's words.

But if the critical theory is to be believed we are mistaken in all this. The historical books of the Old Testament are only at the best second-rate authorities. The facts are not actual embodiments of God's teaching, but mythical embodiments of human thought. The sacred history is in great part the invention of the prophets for the purpose of giving their thoughts permanence and shape. It is plain that, if we accept this, our estimate of the value of the history must be entirely changed. It no longer tells us how God acted, but only how certain men (great and noble men, doubtless) thought He might have acted. The history loses its many sides; we can only find in it what men have put into it. We can no longer examine it in its details. These may show artistic finish, but they will hardly teach valuable truth. Natural products may be put under a microscope. Manufactured articles never stand this test.

All true history, being a history of God's providence, is a revelation of God. No history, whether sacred or profane, is valuable as such, unless it be true.

So I would maintain that, when we contend for the historic truth of the Old Testament Scriptures, we are not contending for a thing of small importance. Doubtless, myths teach lessons, but not lessons direct from God. God made the history, but man made the myth. Even God's words lose half their force to us unless they are based on deeds.

And now let us proceed to examine the critical theory in itself. First, let us inquire how it agrees with *the relation which we find subsisting between the sacred authors and their works.*

It is always interesting to determine the relation between the author of a history and the man or men whose lives he chronicles. It is, indeed, more than interesting. It is almost necessary for us to know whether he draws his portraits from above or from below—from the point of view of a critic, or of an enthusiastic admirer. Sometimes, we know, the subject is too great for its author; then we get nothing but indiscriminate and fulsome praise. At other times, the individuality of the historian is more clearly defined than the individuality of his hero. The author stands in front of his own picture and hides it from our view. If the critical theory of the Old Testament be true, the authors of the historical books are most important personages. They create their heroes, they do not worship them. They mould, or at least modify, their characters; they give them their mission;

they put words into their mouths; when necessary, they supply them with instructive deeds. It is plain then that the author was greater than his heroes. But is this actually the case? Quite the contrary. The authors of the historical books are the great unknowns of Jewish history. Moses excepted, we hardly know the name of a Jewish historian. The different histories, Genesis itself, hardly give us a clue to their author. Nor are we eager to inquire about their authorship. We read the books and never think who wrote them. They are fruitful in instruction, but the instruction is not obtruded upon us. The prophets had the art to throw a light veil over the teaching which was the essential part of their book. They teach us many lessons by the way. They interest many whom they fail to instruct. No doubt they took a keen personal interest in their subject. As Israelites, they wrote the history of Israel. No doubt they had a great object, viz., to teach their nation the lessons of the past. But keen and personal interest and definite aim do not incapacitate a man for the work of an historian. Nay, these qualities are necessary for his work. A book without an aim is a book without form. An author without sympathy produces a book without life.

If we look more closely into the matter, we shall find that the relation between the authors of the Old Testament histories and their heroes is an uncommon one. Nowhere do we find the authors taking a keener and more personal interest in their work. In no breasts has the fire of patriotism burned

more warmly than in the breasts of the children of Abraham. The life of every individual Israelite was bound up in the life of his nation. And yet this keen interest, this tender regard, this warm patriotism, do not turn the historians of the race into its encomiasts. They do not, like their fellow craftsmen in Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, suppress unpleasant facts; or, at least, as this may be saying more than we can prove, if they suppressed *some* unpleasant facts, they retained the memory of a sufficient number. Every Israelite must have taken a pride in his nation's history, but that history was by no means flattering to him. If on the one hand, each historian seems to ask, "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?" on the other hand, they all seem to say, "Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you." Rarely do we find in any history such love for, such pride in, the nation and its heroes, combined with such frank acknowledgments of their faults. The heroes, great as they are, are not too great for the unknown authors.

And this is not a little remarkable, considering the great names whose lives are recorded. One would have thought that in later times the names of Abraham, Moses, David, and the like, might have been held too sacred for criticism. The authors of their histories cannot indeed be said to criticise them, but they quietly record their faults. Abraham's character is doubtless a most noble one, but he does not

appear to advantage either in Gerar or Egypt. Of Isaac we may say his historian certainly did not attempt to idealize his quiet life. The motto of Jacob's life might be taken to be, "Is he not rightly named Jacob?" Of the twelve patriarchs, only Joseph can be an object of our admiration. The failures of Moses, the sins of David, are not passed over without notice. And what does all this prove? Surely this: that the relation between the authors and their heroes is of the simplest and most inartificial character. The histories seem to be what we should expect the earliest histories to be—simple narratives of facts. As far as we can see, the historian does not select his facts, much less colour, or falsify them. On the critical theory, the historians and their doctrines are more important than the facts which they narrate. In reality, we find that the historians are unknown, and the narratives are greater than any lesson which they are supposed to teach.

Passing on to consider further the critical theory we notice this important point in it, *the unscrupulousness of the Old Testament historians*. The historical facts are to them like pieces of wet clay. They mould them as they please. The clay is nothing, its shape and form are everything. "In ancient times," it is said, "more was thought of the spirit of the writer and the tendency of the narrative than the truth of the representation and the accuracy of the details." "The Deuteronomist not only recasts in his own mould the narratives of his predecessors, but takes the liberty of making all those expansions and modi-

fications which appear to him to be necessary for the object he has in view." Priestly and prophetic historians agree in this; history is for them a means not an end; and thus they have no scruple in allowing their own convictions and wishes to exercise a supreme influence on their representation of the past. To sum up all in one short, pithy sentence, "The Old Testament historians subordinated facts to ideas." That is to say, the facts of Israel's history were made subordinate and subservient to the historians' great object—Israel's religious education.⁽³⁾

These are sweeping statements, and we are entitled to demand that they shall be substantiated by sufficient evidence. Scraps of evidence will not suffice. The spirit of a book, or of a series of books, cannot be deduced from a few selected passages. If these statements are true, we may expect traces of the historians' subjectivity to meet us at every turn. There was really nothing to stop them. It is said, "Popular opinion, which holds in restraint the individuality of the modern historian, had no power over them." In other words, they could write untrue history without being found out. Moral considerations, again, are not allowed to have any force whatsoever. Their code of morality was not ours. We may say that the Old Testament historians had almost uncontrolled power of altering the laws and records of the nation. We may be sure that they would not be satisfied with leaving their work incomplete. We should then find few facts inconsistent with or uninfluenced by their ideas.⁽⁴⁾

Is the evidence of this subjective, fact-despising spirit of the Old Testament historians produced in sufficient quantity? I answer unhesitatingly, By no means; unless, indeed, we are ready to lay down this canon of interpretation—*The instructiveness of a narrative is a presumption of its historical falsehood*; that is to say, narratives which were obviously regarded by the narrator as teaching some great doctrine are necessarily, or at least probably, invented, falsified, or coloured for the purpose of teaching it. To state such a canon of interpretation is to refute it. We may well ask, Does the past teach us no lessons till its history has been manipulated? Is it true history alone which is unfruitful in its teaching? Great ideas are then, it seems, always destitute of a historical basis. God's purposes for a nation are obscure and indefinite until we substitute the history as it should have been for the history as it was. We may admit fully that when God's handwriting is upon the wall, a sinful and corrupt generation may be unable to interpret it until the prophet of God appears. This is not the part assigned to the sacred historians in the critical theory. No, when God has so written—for to deny that a nation's history is His handwriting is to deny His providence—when God has so written, then, before the divine lessons can be learned, the prophet must come and alter the handwriting, he must add a sentence here and blot out a sentence there. Forsooth, God would otherwise fail so to teach by His providential dealings that man could understand. But is not such a principle of interpretation an implicit denial of God's

providence? To make instructiveness an indication of the myth, is to depose God from his office of Ruler and Governor of the world.

We demand then something more than the quality of instructiveness in a narrative, as proof of its invention and falsification by its author. Nay, we go further, and maintain that *the instructiveness of a narrative is positive evidence of its truth.*

Mythical narratives are often indeed most instructive, but their instruction is of a narrow and definite kind. Facts which are only the embodiments of ideas lose their many-sidedness. They are only intended for a single purpose, and they only serve that purpose. You are only intended to look upon them in front, they are not finished off behind. The animating, moulding spirit of events in history is God. It is He who orders all things in heaven and earth. His orderings are parts of an incomprehensible scheme. On the other hand, the animating, moulding spirit of a myth is man, and his schemes are limited and defined. We can soon grasp a man's purpose in his greatest work, but who can grasp the purposes of God in the least of the things He has made? God's works serve many turns; man's but few. From this we argue that the myth teaches us few lessons, probably only one; but that history teaches us more lessons than we can learn.

Turning to the Sacred History, what do we find as to its teaching? We are struck at once by its variety and its depth. There are lessons on the surface, lessons obvious to the most ignorant; there are lessons

also which only gradually unfold themselves to the most earnest and persevering searchers after truth. There are lessons for the particular circumstances of the time, but there are lessons also for all ages and circumstances. The many sidedness of Scripture is proverbial. It seems impossible to exhaust its applications. Can we believe that any men, however great, were able to put so much teaching into narratives which they invented out of their own hearts? If so, there were giants in the earth in those days, and the modern degeneracy of the race is no fable but a too patent truth. If not, we are entitled to maintain that the instructiveness of Scripture is a strong argument against the critical theory.

Proceeding further with our consideration, we inquire what the *internal character of a history written on the critical principles would be.*

It is plain such a history might have its uses, though they would be limited. It might have a peculiar beauty; not indeed the natural beauty of truth and reality, but the artificial beauty produced by the poetic fancy and imagination. But a history written on such principles could hardly fail to betray manifestly its un-historic character. Bear in mind what the materials are said to have been;—a mass of heterogeneous and inconsistent traditions in which every age had left corruptions, and to which every age had made additions. It was rather legend than history, and “In popular legend the imagination plays an important part.” Bear in mind also the spirit in which the prophet is said to have used his materials. He does not care about his-

toric truth, his one aim is to present forcibly and vividly the truths with which God has filled His own heart. He supplied any hiatus in the tradition, he suppressed any inconvenient fact. Everything was subordinated to the truth he had to teach.⁽⁵⁾

If, then, the prophet was so utterly indifferent to historic truth, would he be careful about historic accuracy? He used the greatest freedom in dealing with substantial facts; would he be very particular about his details? It is plain he had neither the will nor the power to acquaint himself personally with the habits and customs of some of the people whom he described. He could not get up his subject like the modern writer of a historical novel. Under these circumstances it is a miracle that the history is not full of gross and glaring anachronisms.

Now, I do not deny that *it is alleged anachronisms are to be found in the Old Testament Scriptures*. I do not deny that a plausible case may be made out in support of some of them; but no one can assert that the narrative is full of them, or that they are of a gross and obvious kind.⁽⁶⁾ On the contrary, the Egyptian monuments, the Babylonian inscriptions, ancient history generally, seem to conspire together to shew the wonderful knowledge of the manners, customs, institutions, and history of their own nation and of the surrounding nations possessed by the sacred historians. No doubt they cannot be tested on many points; they are our sole authorities for the history of the chosen people during centuries. But, whenever they can be tested, they stand the test well. If the narrative is not truth-

ful, it is at least truthlike. Could such a likeness to truth have been artificially produced by a historian of those early times? Would he have set himself to produce it if he could? On the critical theory such a likeness to truth was a matter of indifference to him. But, if he laboured after it, as the result proves he must have laboured, how can you acquit him of a deliberate attempt to deceive? Though indifferent to historic truth, he was anxious that his narrative should be believed to be historically true.

It will be remembered that on the critical theory the Jewish tradition is particularly untrustworthy; for it was the custom of the nation to reproduce in the lives of the fathers of their race events which had occurred in their own experience. It is plain that by this peculiarity they opened wide the door for anachronisms. It is most difficult to fit the event of one age into the history of another. It is most difficult to clothe a modern event in suitable ancient dress.

But surely something more than historic accuracy is sacrificed by this peculiar method of creating history. When the present is portrayed in the past, when the lives of descendants are reproduced in their ancestors, we must not expect to find definite or consistent characters in the history; or, at the very least, the types must be few. We must not expect to be able to trace the development of individual character or of national life.

Now, what opinion will any candid man, whatever his conclusion as to the composition of the O'd Testa-

ment, give us concerning *the Bible characters*? Will not all admit they have a beauty, a freshness, a definiteness, a variety, peculiarly their own? He who runs may read them. He who stops to gaze wonders at them. They are not puppets walking on a stage. They are not embodiments of virtues or ideas. They have a reality about them. As we read their lives, we own them to be men of like passions with ourselves. They may walk on a higher level, but they are creatures of the same flesh and blood. Spite of their Eastern surroundings, spite of their different circumstances, spite also (and this would be a great point with some) of the supernatural halo which rests upon them, we feel, and no one can disturb us in our conviction, they are life-like, truth-like, man-like.

Doubtless, life-like, natural characters may be the creation of poetic fancy. But this is not an explanation which can be given here. The sacred historian, however great his freedom, was not quite free to create the characters of the founders and heroes of the race. His portraiture, if new in some respects, could only be made on the old lines. He might use his materials freely, but he would have to use them, and he would be hampered by them. To create a consistent life-like character is a work of genius, and, one might hazard the remark, of genius unparalleled in those early times. But to form consistent life-like characters out of inconsistent and heterogeneous materials, would seem to be an impossibility. This impossible task, if the critical theory be true, the sacred historians accomplish over and over again. They accomplish it without pains or thought,

quite by the way. Their object is not to delineate character. The great names of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, are to them names of weight by which they can effect the great purpose of educating their nation in the truth. They do not care for consistency of character: they only seek to enforce their great ideas.

There is another point in the description of character which gives no trouble to the narrator of simple fact, but which needs all the skill of the novelist to produce; and that is, the development of character under varying circumstances, or its gradual modification by prosperity or adversity. If the critical theory be true, such development would be impossible. How could the character of the founder of the race retain its individuality and exhibit a consistent growth, when alien elements were introduced from the lives and characters of his descendents? When elements from different ages were mixt up together, the inevitable result must have been to destroy all traces of development either in the character of the nation or of individuals.

And here again the historical facts are against the theory. It is no hard matter to trace a development in the history of the chosen people from the patriarchal times. We see them pass from childhood to manhood, from disorganisation to settled condition, from prosperity to corruption. How can we do this if the histories of the different generations are mixed up together? It is no hard matter again to trace a development of character in the history of individuals. Jacob and Joseph,

Samuel and Saul, David and Solomon, at once suggest themselves as instances. How is it that their characters have not suffered from the Jewish method of writing history?⁽⁷⁾ It is needless to say that they have *not* suffered. We know them who they are. They were the friends of our childhood and they are the friends of our maturer age. We feel we shall be able to recognise them when, coming from the far West, we shall stand with them side by side in the kingdom of our Lord and God.

To take another point. *This critical theory of the Old Testament leaves much that is not and cannot be accounted for.* We say sometimes, We must take things as we find them. But if this theory be true, the authors of the books of the Old Testament might rather say, We leave things as we made them. They did a great work, it must be confessed. The Pentateuch and Joshua were theirs from beginning to end, and no other historical book escaped their manipulation. The question one is inclined to ask is, whilst they were about it, why could they not do a little more? One feels that some one was wanted to correct, so to speak, their work for the press. The addition of a sentence here, the omission of a sentence there, a few corrections in matters of detail, would have finished off their work and made it a perfect whole. On the critical theory this free editing was their peculiar work. They coloured and suppressed facts as it pleased them. Why is it then that we find so many sections useless for their purpose, even more, influential against it? Why did they leave so many awkward facts behind?

It may be answered these escaped their notice. The answer will hardly serve. It is not merely that the great characters, the prophets, heroes, good kings of the nation act inconsistently. It is not merely that they fall into sin, and that their sins are faithfully recorded. Even this is not an unimportant witness to the faithfulness of the narrative, but there is something more than this. Some of them never speak and act as the prophets of the seventh century would have liked them to have acted. Some of them violate the injunctions of the Mosaic Law, and yet the narrative gives not even the slightest hint of disapproval. If you search the lives of Elijah and Elisha through you cannot find a single denunciation of the schismatical calf worship. Elisha lives on friendly terms with kings of the northern kingdom, though they did evil in the sight of the Lord. Yes, says the modern critic, that proves the second commandment was not in existence. In reply it may be sufficient to notice that these prophets were confronted by a greater sin; Baal Worship was infinitely worse than Calf Worship. But surely the prophet who invented the second commandment, and dared to put it even into the mouth of God; the prophet who invented the narrative of the making and worshipping of the golden calf in the wilderness, and the fierce retribution exacted by Moses; the prophet who brought out the final edition of the books of Kings, and the burden of whose judgment on the kings of Israel is, "He departed not from the sin of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin;" the prophet who, according to the critics, did actually manipulate the speeches of Elijah

and Elisha, and make them say what they ought to have said; surely he might, for it was his business, have put into the mouths of Elijah or Elisha some stern rebuke of the national sin. Instead of that he left them almost like connivers in idolatrous worship. The historian with a purpose left his purpose unattained.⁽⁸⁾

I am using here the great critical argument against the critical theory. As against the critical theory it has ten-fold force. The simple chronicler of events finds his original narratives, and inserts them in his history. He may be surprised that the good men of old acted in this way or that, but it is not his business. He chronicles facts as he finds them. The ancient historian, as the critics describe him, does not act in this way. When he finds no facts convenient for his purpose, he invents some. It was his business, it was his method, to make Elijah and Elisha do their duty if they had not done it. So doing, he was furthering the cause he had at heart. He was teaching the truth as God had revealed it to him. For historic truth he cared nothing.

Time forbids me from comparing in detail the narratives of the Old Testament with the critical theory of their composition. The comparison would be most instructive, and may be easily made. A knowledge of the Hebrew language would not be essential. I would suggest the Book Genesis to any one who was obliged to confine his attention to one particular part. You have got there the lives of the ancestors of the nation: see whether the after history of Israel is reproduced in them. You have got there many types of character,

see whether they are consistent and life-like. You will undoubtedly find a purpose running through the narrative, but consider carefully which is the greater—the historical facts or the historian's idea. Look carefully for anachronisms; you will find them, if at all, only in five or six sentences you would never miss. You have Israel in contact with Egyptian civilization; test the accuracy of the historian by reference to Egyptian authorities.

The arguments I have been using in this lecture have been directed against the critical theory of the composition of the Old Testament history. Used positively, they prove the substantial truth of the Old Testament narratives. They do not determine the authorship of any of those narratives, except indirectly. They may help to determine the time in which a book was written. We may find on inquiry that there was only one person in that time capable of writing it. This is the utmost such arguments can do. We may freely admit that we are unable to determine the authorship of the historical books of the Old Testament. That is a matter of small importance, if only we are convinced of their historical truth. Far better that we should have in substantial accuracy the great books of lost men, than that we should be able to tell the titles of the lost books of great men.

On the traditional theory it is not surprising that we should know so little of the authors of the Old Testament. The work was, as we have seen, greater than the workman. On the critical theory it is most surprising, for the workman was greater than his work.

Where, we may ask, may we find those prophetic historians who invented such narratives, who delineated such characters, who teach us such lessons? We know nothing about them. We must find some unchronicled period of Jewish history, we must suppose the authors were working in the dark. When the light returns we find their work, but they are gone, and have left no name behind. And, as for the people of Israel, they are ready to accept any books thus mysteriously handed to them. Mark this, they accept the narratives which are false, they refuse the teaching which is true. Was this a Nemesis on work animated by a noble spirit, but attempted in an improper way?

This we may say without hesitation, if the prophets thus invented the history of their nation, they were untrue, whether consciously or unconsciously, to their own noble teaching. They forgot that great truth which they nevertheless remembered in times of the greatest difficulty and distress; "Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the Name of the Lord Our God." When they invented facts to serve as the vehicles of spiritual teachings, then they sinned against that commandment which it was their especial aim to impress upon their people. In a very real and true sense they made to themselves a graven image, the earthly likeness of a spiritual truth; and they forgot that the Lord their God was a jealous God.

EXCURSUS ON LECTURE II.

THE BOOK GENESIS IN ITS RELATION TO THE CRITICAL THEORY.

The statements made as to the mythical character of the book Genesis by Kuenen are very definite. The obstacles in the way of regarding its narratives as true history are regarded by him as insurmountable. These "present us, not with real, historical personages, but with personifications." Their only historical value is, "They teach us what the Israelites thought as to their affinities with the tribes around them, and as to the manner of their own settlement in the land of their abode." There is "an historical kernel" but that is all. ⁽¹⁾

Kuenen admits that it naturally costs some trouble to accustom oneself to this idea. And indeed the loss to Christian people is immense. We thought we had the histories of real men of like passions with ourselves, and were able to draw from them examples of faith and obedience. Instead we have only ideas, stories with a good moral, stories interesting enough no doubt, but lacking that invaluable characteristic of truth for which not only children long. Further we have been taught to regard Abraham as the father of all faithful ones. To lose him is a loss indeed.

But of course the claims of truth are inexorable. If it is indeed the light of truth which has opened our eyes, so that we can no longer sleep and dream, there is nothing more to be said. Only we will not part from our Bible friends and patterns without knowing the reason why.

On what grounds then is this sacrifice demanded of us?

The reasons alleged by Kuenen are :

"A number of particulars of greater or less importance, which cannot possibly pass for history." ⁽²⁾

This, if true, will not serve his turn. Every great man has legendary stories told about him. Legendary details in a history do not make their subject a legendary hero, they do not change a person into a personification.

But what are these particulars ?

Kuenen selects some instances. We may presume that they are the most forcible he can find.

(a) "*The origin of one and the same name*" (the examples given are Beersheba, Bethel, and Israel) "*is explained in various ways.*"

It is difficult to see any force whatever in this argument.

In order that a name may be fixed to a person or place, something more than one gift of it is necessary. More especially is this true if the gift is of the nature of an alteration. The alteration needs to be emphasised. It must be adopted by different persons under different circumstances.

In these particular cases is there anything unnatural in the supposition that Isaac revived the name Beersheba, first given by his father ; that Jacob renewed publicly on his return to Canaan the name Bethel, privately given when he left his father's house ; that God emphasised the name Israel by giving it to Jacob on two different occasions ?

(b) "*One and the same event is related more than once with discrepancies of detail.*"

The events referred to are (1) Abraham's artifice for securing his safety in Gerar and Egypt. (2) The quarrels of Abraham's and Isaac's herdsmen with the herdsmen of Abimelech.

In these cases the important point, whether the same event is referred to, is assumed. Events may be similar in some of their circumstances without being identical. In case (1), it may be said, the peril may not unnaturally have occurred more than once, and may have been met each time by the same artifice. It is not likely that

stories reflecting on Abraham's character would have been invented in later times. In case (2), quarrels between rival herdsmen can have been no uncommon event in those times. The recurrence of the names Abimelech and Phichol furnishes the only forcible element to the argument, but these may be titles rather than names.

Of objections of a more general nature the following are given:

(a) *The religious ideas which are ascribed to the patriarchs.* ⁽³⁾

"Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not inferior to the prophets of the 8th century B.C. in pureness of religious insight, and inward spiritual piety."

Both fact and inference may be denied.

(1) The fact.

The religious ideas of the patriarchs are pure, but they are very simple. Patriarchal simplicity is a characteristic of the patriarchal religion. Their conception of God is high and true, but it differs from that of the prophets, as the truth before controversy differs from the truth after it. Patriarchal history supplies prophetic doctrine with a firm foundation, but it does no more. The facts we find, but not the deductions from the facts; nay, we have reason to doubt whether the patriarchs could have made them; their words and actions shew that they had not yet learnt the truths which the history plainly teaches us. The patriarchs make no statements as to the nature of God, His separation from created beings, the characteristics which distinguish Him from other gods. They do not enquire whether there is only one God; they know that they have only one. Monotheism is for them a practical fact, not a doctrinal theory. Their relations to God are of the simplest kind. We have no searchings of heart as to God's dealings; no long prayers or confessions of sin; no comparisons between material sacrifices and moral duties; no mention of feasts or holy days. Their standard of right and wrong is of an elementary type. Obedience to God's

voice rather than to God's law is their conception of duty. Their sense of sin and guilt is not strongly developed. Joseph's exclamation, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" seems to be an advance on anything we have found before. The Messianic idea is of the simplest character. A deliverance has been promised, but there is no description of the Deliverer and His work, except such as we may find in Gen. 49. 10.

(2) The inference.

The inference depends upon the assumption of the truth of the critical theory as to the composition of the Old Testament, but the mythical character of Genesis is one of the proofs of that theory. In other words, you first assume your theory and then you deduce a proof for it.

(b) *Chronological difficulties.*

These are no doubt considerable, but it may be questioned whether they are insuperable. In any case they are not of such a nature as to give special support to the mythical hypothesis. Numbers in myths have their own part to play and lesson to teach. They are of a peculiar shape and form. The same number recurs again and again. The numbers in Genesis do not give us the idea that they are intended to teach lessons. They have not generally that "round" character of which the critics make much elsewhere. It is to be remembered that numbers in ancient manuscripts were peculiarly liable both to accidental and to intentional alterations at the hands of scribes and editors. Corruptions in numbers give no sufficient grounds for suspecting general corruption of the narrative or the text.

(c) *The familiar intercourse of the Deity with the patriarchs which may be compared to the stories of heathen mythology.*

The fact is admitted, the analogy disputed, the inference denied.

Are the stories of heathen mythology really analogous to the narratives of Genesis? Is there not as wide a difference between the two as between the true God and the false gods? For instance, what comparison can be fairly drawn between the stories of Homer and the narratives of Genesis? In both, no doubt, gods and men meet, but there the similarity ends. In the one case the stories tell of the degradation of the deity, in the other of the elevation of man.

Is the familiar intercourse of God with the patriarchs a thing improbable in itself? On the contrary, we maintain that the circumstances of the age made such intercourse natural and probable, and gave it a sufficient purpose.

The age of the patriarchs was the age of childhood for the human race. We may expect to find that God dealt with them as with children, when He sought to bring them to a knowledge of Himself.

A child is most readily taught and its character formed, not by books, or laws, or reasonings, but by personal influence—familiar intercourse with parents and teachers. Such personal influence could not in the patriarchal age be exercised by man upon his brother men. All were children alike. The personal teachers of mankind must be Beings of a higher race.

With a child the influence of the parent is far the greatest. But that influence must be exerted directly. Its force is wasted in transmission through servants or messengers. Nothing can supply the place of the presence, the look, the voice of the parent himself. Here, then, we find a reason for the teaching of the patriarchs, not by angels, but directly by God.

And, again, mankind in the patriarchal age were in the position of children who have forgotten their father, or who have never known him. In such cases, familiar,

personal intercourse is the *only* way of making the idea of parent a reality to the child. That idea must be objectively presented. A child who has not seen its father knows not what a father is. Before faults can be corrected, or rules of life can be enforced, filial relations must be firmly established by direct communication between father and child. May we not fairly say that "the familiar intercourse of the Deity with the patriarchs" can be accounted for by these well-known principles?

(d) "*The principal cause of hesitation*" is "*that the persons who appear as actors in the narratives of Genesis have one characteristic in common: they are all progenitors of tribes.*" (4)

Exactly so; it is this characteristic which gives them their place in Genesis. It is a book of beginnings. It is a chronicle of the lives of the ancestors of the Israelites and cognate nations. Are there no such persons as founders of tribes and nations? If not, why may there not be a book which contains their history? The list of nations descended from Abraham's father may seem to be a formidable one; but all of them together inhabited but a small portion of the earth's surface. There are other valid reasons for supposing that they came of a common stock. The words of the narratives are not to be pressed to mean that the tribes and nations were all blood descendents of their founder. The genealogy in S. Matthew's Gospel should teach us what the word "begat" may include. Families are the nucleus of tribes. The family of the tribe's founder and first great chief is the leaven which leavens the whole lump. The founder's great name furnishes a centre of attraction. The children of his sons and of his daughters alike attach themselves to the fortunes of his tribe, and are alike reckoned among his descendents. Those born in his house, though not of his seed, are readily admitted into the full privileges of his family.

This is all the positive evidence furnished by Kuenen for the mythical character of the narratives of Genesis. It can hardly be reckoned conclusive. Some arguments on the other side may now be adduced.

If the character of Genesis are personifications, of what are they personifications? Let us examine a few cases.

ISAAC.

There are certain types of character which may be found both in real life and in the pages of a myth. But there is one kind of person, and that a very common kind, which has no fellow amongst personifications. In a myth no place can be found for the man whose history contains no stirring events and whose character contains no striking points. Such men have their uses, but their use is often not apparent to their fellow men. Every mythical character must be useful and its use must be apparent. In consequence, lives and characters of an ordinary type are avoided.

What then can be said of Isaac as a personification? His character is common enough in real life, but in the pages of a myth it has no place. Isaac's history is thoroughly disappointing to us. An extraordinary birth ushers in a very ordinary life. We expect great things from Abraham's only son, the heir of the promise; but nothing great is recorded of him. There is nothing unnatural in this, the children of great men often disappoint expectations. But the novelist avoids such disappointments, and the myth does not contain useless characters. So we conclude that the character of Isaac, (the successful farmer, who "loved Esau because he did eat of his venison," the dupe of Jacob and Rebekah,) though natural enough when regarded as an historical character, is most unnatural and inexplicable when regarded as a personification.

Such being the case, we inquire with great curiosity what was Isaac's *raison d'être* on the mythical hypothesis. The reply is, "The part which Isaac plays in tradition is very insignificant; he serves scarcely any other purpose than that of representing the

unity of Edom and Israel." "If the relation between the Israelites and the Edomites was exceptionally close—Amos already calls Israel Edom's brother, and condemns their enmity as a strife between brothers—then it was necessary that the progenitors of these tribes should be brothers, nay, actually twin brothers." (5)

It was difficult to see what part a man of Isaac's character could play; but the part assigned to him is a direct contradiction of all the historical facts. When had the unity of Israel and Edom any historical existence? During the prophetic period, the hostility of Edom to Israel is more strongly marked than that of any of the cognate nations. When were the relations between the Israelites and Edomites exceptionally close? To use Amos's words, "Edom did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever." On one occasion in Biblical history, the Edomites, as vassals to the king of Judah, supplied a contingent to his army and joined in an expedition against Moab. Then only did the two nations act together.

The mythical theory in Isaac's case thus utterly fails. As a personification, his character is unnatural and improbable. The history fails to account for him. If he represents unity between Israel and Edom, he represents an historic falsehood.

JACOB AND ESAU.

The relations between Israel and Edom will repay further consideration in connexion with the critical theory. How far can it be said that these relations are shadowed forth in the lives of Jacob and Esau? The Edomites do not appear on the pages of Israelitish history after the Exodus till the days of Saul. Conquered by Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 47), and almost exterminated by David (1 Kings xi. 15, 16), they gained their independence in the days of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat (2 Kings viii. 20). Afterwards, though beaten in great battles, they were a thorn in the side of the weaker kings of Judah (2 Chron. xxviii. 17);

and were Nebuchadnezzar's allies when he made his final attack upon Jerusalem. When all was lost and resistance had ceased, they held the passes and cut off the fugitives (Obadiah vv. 11-14). It was this merciless treatment of their brother Israel in the day of his distress, which caused the Edomites to be regarded as the type of the national enemy.

The writings of the prophets confirm this last conclusion. The earlier prophets, Amos and Joel, denounce a curse upon the Edomites for their unbrotherly conduct. But a more bitter feeling is expressed, and a more terrible curse denounced, by the prophets of the exile. Kuenen says, (⁶) "The predictions dating from the Babylonish captivity, and the period after the restoration of the Jewish state, form a second group. They are distinguished from the earlier oracles most of all by the spirit of greater enmity towards Edom which appears in them." So then we may take for granted that Israelitish hatred of Edom, though it appears in the writings of the earlier prophets, becomes a consuming passion about the times of the exile.

Now let us turn back to the Pentateuch. How far is the course of the history reflected there?

In the book Genesis Esau is not, *prima facie* at least, represented to us in an unfavourable light. His faults are not thrown into relief. On the contrary, he appears to advantage by the side of Jacob. No doubt Jacob is represented as chosen of God, Esau as rejected by Him; but our first feeling is against this choice; we need spiritual discernment to see the reasons for it. As the history runs, opportunities are given for the mythical representation of Edomite cruelty and unbrotherliness. They are not taken advantage of by the historian. We are certainly entitled to say that the relations between Jacob and Esau are not typical of the relations between Israelites and Edomites.

And when we separate the Pentateuch into its component parts, as the critics would have us, a still more forcible argument may be drawn. The earlier part of Genesis, that due to "the Jahvist," depicts Esau in the more unfavourable light. In "the later part, due to the priestly writer, we no longer find any trace

of the contention between Jacob and Esau, *i.e.*, between Israel and Edom." (7) In other words the writer, who makes his contribution to the Pentateuch when the hatred of the Israelite to the Edomite is a burning passion, does not reflect that hatred in the smallest degree. He does not reproduce the history of later times in the lives of the ancestors of the race. Edom is the national enemy, but Esau and Jacob have no causes of quarrel.

Passing on to the Deuteronomist, we find that he by no means reflects the feelings of later times. He is supposed to write his book in Josiah's time, when hatred of the Edomite was strong, though not yet at its full strength. Nevertheless, he speaks of an Edomite in terms to which no parallel can be found in the writings of the prophets, and which by no means agrees with the relations between Israel and Edom, as described in the later history. His ordinance is, "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother," (Deut. xxiii. 7). The Edomites are favoured above the Ammonites and Moabites. Their children might enter many generations sooner into the congregation of the Lord (Deut. xxiii. 3, 8). Even their unkindly conduct towards the Children of Israel in refusing permission to cross their land is hardly noticed. The narrative does not assert, though it implies, that the permission was refused, but no complaint is made. The author of the parallel passage in Numbers represents Edom's hostility in a much stronger light. There hatred, here fear, seems to animate Edomite opposition. (Numb. xx. 14-21, Deut. ii. 4-8).

The case may be summed up thus. On the critical theory, "the Jahvist" should have been the least bitter in his hostility to Edom, the Deuteronomist should have been bitter, the Priestly writer most bitter of all. In fact we find that it is only "the Jahvist" who expresses any hostility whatever. No idea of national hostility is in the Priestly writer's mind. The Deuteronomist regards the Edomite as the Israelite's brother. The Israelitish historians did not, it is plain, handle this part of the history at least "in conformity with their own point of view." "The influence of the narrators' opinions is" *not* "unmistakably apparent" in their account of the relations between Jacob and Esau. (8)

THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF JOSEPH.

Another important argument against the mythical theory of Genesis may be derived from *the Life and Character of Joseph*. Joseph's case gives us an opportunity of putting that theory to a critical test. In many narratives we can hardly say what are anachronisms and what are not. We have no external contemporary tests. But Joseph's life was spent in the land of Egypt, and the details of the narratives relating to him can be tested by ancient Egyptian history, and more especially by the Egyptian monuments. What then is their witness concerning the Biblical narrative? Canon Rawlinson says, "A reference to any good modern comment upon the Pentateuch will show that there is now scarcely a single point in the whole range of Egyptian manners and customs touched on by Moses, the exact truth of which cannot be proved from ancient sources."

Now is it possible that such accuracy would be found in a narrative based upon a corrupt tradition, and altered for doctrinal purposes? It must be remembered that there was little or no intercommunication between the Egyptians and Israelites from the Exodus to the time of Solomon. And after his time Egypt rarely appears in Israelitish history till the fall of the northern kingdom, when Egypt and Assyria began to contend for the empire of the world. And yet the critical theory requires of the unknown author or editor of the narrative of Joseph, in addition to many other qualifications, a knowledge of Egypt and Egyptian customs not inferior to that of a native. By him Canaan is lost sight of altogether, and his whole narrative is clothed in an Egyptian dress. Is this likely? Is it even possible? Do not these facts compel us to seek for the author of Joseph's history in the times of the Exodus or before it?

Again, the character of Joseph is another proof of the genuineness of the narrative. Which of the Old Testament characters is more simple and natural than his? Its continuity has been remarked. ⁽⁹⁾ Strong natural affection runs through it like a golden thread. It is reflected in Jacob's strong affection for him.

It survives many years of absence. It is manifest in repeated enquiries after his father's life and health, and in the burst of weeping in which Joseph made himself known. Joseph, it may be noticed, is the earliest type of filial affection. Another guiding principle of Joseph's character was his realization of God's presence and of God's rule. In Egypt as well as in Canaan, in adversity as well as in prosperity, in private and in public, in the prison-house and on the ruler's seat, Joseph recognises that God is King, and that to Him he will have to give an account. This principle makes him a trusted and trustworthy servant, it makes him an able and a far-seeing ruler. It subdues his natural passions, whether of lust or revenge. It enables him, and this is most difficult to see God's overruling hand in the injuries inflicted upon him by his fellow-men.

Now are we to suppose that this noble and simple character is a fabrication, and a fabrication not for the character's sake, but for the purpose of inculcating some religious truths or shadowing some political facts? Surely the prophetic writers must have left Joseph's character alone.

We are told the belief of the Israelites was that the fathers of the race lived in miniature the lives of their descendents. ⁽¹⁰⁾ What is there in the lives of Joseph and his brethren to support such a theory? Joseph is the separated one from his brethren; but what is there in the history of Joseph's tribe which would give Joseph such a character? Where, in the history, do we find a conspiracy of all the other tribes against the tribe of Joseph? The sympathies of the author of this section must have been with the northern kingdom. He gives Joseph the first place; and something more. But Judah is not given his right position; he is not depicted as Joseph's rival, but rather as the mediator between Joseph and his brethren. When did the tribe of Judah play a part like this? When Joseph is shown to be pre-eminent in goodness and power, Judah should have been the ringleader of his brethren in wickedness. On the contrary, he is represented in a more favourable light than they are. True, Joseph's chastity is contrasted with Judah's impurity. But it is

Judah's touching supplication, shewing his unselfish love for his father, which breaks down Joseph's reserve and causes him to make himself known to his brethren.

Again, Joseph's relations with Benjamin do not correspond to anything in the history of after time. The brothers Joseph and Benjamin are united by the closest bonds, but the tribe of Benjamin casts in his lot with Judah. Instead of Joseph and Benjamin against Judah and the rest, it is Judah and Benjamin against Joseph and the rest.

Now if this narrative has been concocted for a purpose,—to reflect the later history, we have a right to ask the meaning of all these facts. They can hardly be called details, they are leading features of the story. The author who could draw the character of Joseph had ability in abundance. That he did by the way. How was it he failed in his proper work and left his mythical representation indistinct? This narrative, so says the critical theory, assumed its present shape some time after the separation of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Can we believe that such an account of the relations of Joseph and his brethren was for the first time accepted then? It might have been accepted in the Northern kingdom; but would the kingdom of Judah have welcomed a book which humiliated their great ancestor in comparison with his chief rival, and which cast a slur upon the parentage of David? If it is impossible to find an Ephraimite who could have written the narrative, it is equally impossible that it could have been accepted by the tribe of Judah.

It seems needless to go into further details—*e.g.*, that Abraham as a personification is “pre-eminently the progenitor of tribes.”⁽¹¹⁾ The mythical theory of the composition of Genesis plainly fails to account for the facts. The statement that “a new light is [thus] thrown not only upon the patriarchal history in its entirety, but also upon many a particular which now seems unimportant or quite inexplicable,”⁽¹²⁾ seems to be the exact contrary to the truth. The mythical theory takes away more light than it gives, and it raises far more difficulties than it explains.

LECTURE III.

“THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.”—LUKE XVI., 16.

The prophets of Israel are separated from their own generation in a very remarkable way. They are honoured after their death, but they are scoffed at and persecuted during their lives. The fathers kill them, the children build their sepulchres. The nation drinks wine, and praises the gods of gold and of silver, of brass and of iron, of wood and of stone. Then comes the prophet to the banqueting-house, not to feast or to receive gifts, but to denounce wickedness and to foretell inevitable ruin. He stands before kings and is not afraid. He puts aside the gifts offered him with a scornful hand. He speaks God's words, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear.

But although the prophets of Israel separate themselves from their own generation, they do not separate themselves from the past history of their nation. They do not represent themselves as the teachers of a new revelation. They base their teaching on a revelation that has gone before. They apply the lessons of the past to present circumstances. When a prophet tells the people to hear his law and to incline their ears unto the words of his mouth, he does not proceed to tell them some new thing, but he declares “hard sentences of old.” From father to child, the revelation of God to Israel has been handed on, and

its burden is this: Jehovah "made a covenant with Jacob, and gave Israel a law, which He commanded our forefathers to teach their children; that their posterity might know it and the children which were yet unborn; to the intent that when they came up they might shew their children the same."⁽²⁾

The view which the prophets take of their own teaching is confirmed by Jewish tradition. Undoubtedly the Jewish nation always reckoned Moses to be the greatest of the prophets. His manner of receiving revelation is contrasted with theirs. Of him it is said that "there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do." To the other prophets Jehovah made Himself known in visions and spake unto them in dreams; but with Moses God spake mouth to mouth, plainly and not in dark speeches, and he beheld the similitude of the Lord. Undoubtedly, also, the Jewish nation reckoned the Torah to be the primary Revelation. Many ceremonial enactments indicate that the holiness of the Books of the Prophets was not to be compared with the holiness of the Book of the Law. Many a Rabbinical saying shews that the Law was reckoned to be complete in itself. The prophets added and could add nothing to it: they could apply it and interpret it, they could develop its principles, but they could do no more.⁽²⁾

When, therefore, for the traditional phrase, "The Law and the Prophets," the modern critic substitutes,

“The Prophets and the Law,”⁽³⁾ he disregards what the prophets say of themselves, and what the Jews say of them. The books the prophets composed in another’s name stand on a higher level than their own acknowledged writings. Never was a forgery more successful or more fitly punished. The prophet forged writings in another’s name, and so dimmed the lustre of his own.

But more important difficulties than these may be urged against the critical theory. If you deprive the prophets of the one book on which their teaching could be founded, how do you account for the prophets and their teaching? You frame a theory which accounts for the composition of the Pentateuch on naturalistic principles; but in so doing you cut the ground from under the prophets’ feet. The prophets had to learn before they could teach; what was their text-book? Not the law; it had to be fabricated. Not the history (at least, with the earlier prophets), for it had yet to be written in the true spirit. By whom, then, were the prophets taught? By the direct inspiration of God apart from all human means? That is the only answer the modern critics have left for themselves, an answer which they certainly will not give.⁽⁴⁾

The teaching of the prophets is such that a careful preparation of the teachers is demanded. Prophetical teaching is not one of those common plants concerning which we do not need to ask whence it springs. The prophets have familiarized us with

certain principles of right. They have taught us what it is which makes a man acceptable in God's sight. Their teaching on these points is accepted by all Christians as certain, nay, as obvious truth. But these truths were not always familiar and obvious. Their doctrine, when they taught it, was on many points new and strange. It is certain they derived no help from heathen teachers. It is certain they were far in advance of their nation and their time. Hence the serious difficulty which arises when the sole basis of their teaching is taken away.

The teaching of the prophets was unique, it was also one consistent whole. The prophets' teachings were at unity amongst themselves. What was the cause of this agreement? Cause there must have been. The prophets did not hand down from age to age the sayings of their predecessors.- Of them as of The Great Prophet it was true, they taught with authority, and not as the scribes. The later canonical prophets used freely the writings of the earlier ones, but they were independent teachers. The earlier prophets were in the main independent of one another. We want a founder of the prophetic school of thought, but unless he is Moses we cannot find him. On the critical theory he cannot be Moses. The very few, though, no doubt, great ideas, which the modern critics allow Moses to have left behind, do not make a sufficiently wide common ground for the prophetic teaching. On the traditional theory the agreement of the prophets is natural; they all have the same teacher, even

God, and they all use the same text-book, the Pentateuch. On the critical theory the agreement is inexplicable.⁽⁵⁾

The prophets had no basis for their teaching, but they wanted one. The critical theory practically admits this. For what reason were the various editions of the Pentateuch put forth? It was because the prophets had no definite written word to which they could appeal.⁽⁶⁾ They were preachers without a text. They could conceive new truths, but they could not apply them to the hearts of the people. And yet which is the more difficult task? Placed as the prophets are supposed to have been placed, we might almost say their teaching was a creation.⁽⁷⁾ They succeeded in this most difficult of all tasks—the creation of new truths; they failed in the less difficult task of bringing home the truth to the consciences of men.

And yet the prophets are not so much deep thinkers as practical teachers. It is in action that their power is most remarkable. They do not, generally at least, live in retirement, but in the world. They are not students, but statesmen. Their primary function is not to write books, but to deliver their message publicly. Yet they succeeded where they were weak, and failed where they were strong.

Yet again, the theory implies a want of confidence in the prophetic power, for which the history gives no warrant. The prophets have an intense conviction that God has sent them. They believe that they have a word from God for the people.⁽⁸⁾

Often they would leave that word unsaid, if they could ; but God's word in their heart was as a burning fire shut up in their bones, they were weary with forbearing, they could not stay. Would such men need to take shelter in another prophet's name, even though he were the greatest of them all? What reason had they for inventing, "Thus saith Moses," when they were convinced they were able to say, "Thus saith Jehovah?" The prophets were most assuredly capable of leading a crusade against the popular sins, without inventing a book to aid them in the work. When we think of Isaiah calm and fearless in the presence of Sennacherib's host ; when we think again of Jeremiah, with his timid disposition, openly advising treason to the State in obedience to God's commands ; when we remember how Jonah could pass through the great heathen city Nineveh, crying, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown ;" then we are convinced that the prophets had no occasion to bolster up their cause by the names of ancient teachers, however great. When, again, we mark their high morality, their trust in God and confidence in their mission, we are convinced that they would have refused such weapons and such help.

The different editions of the Pentateuch were composed, it is said, with a purpose, viz., To teach the people of Israel that Jehovah was their God and they were His people, and to promote and enforce His orderly and exclusive worship.⁽⁹⁾ We may, then,

expect the Pentateuch to shew this purpose by its internal character. A book written with a purpose may miss its aim, but it will at any rate shew the mark at which it aimed.

It may be freely confessed that the whole Pentateuch accomplishes the first part of its purpose. "Ye shall be my people and I will be your God," is the lesson written on every page. But it is well worthy of notice that its author or authors achieve far more than this. They might have done their work in a narrow, exclusive way. They have so done it that the first book of the Hebrew nation has become the first book of the world. Genesis is not only a necessary introduction to the history of the Jewish people, it is a necessary introduction to the history of the people of God. It is not only a necessary introduction to the Pentateuch, it is a necessary introduction to revelation itself. And the later books of the Pentateuch, although they have more of a national tone, bear no traces of an exclusive or intolerant spirit. They are not written in honour of Abraham's seed, but to bring honour to God. God is the centre of thought, not Israel. The result is we are able to feel that all the things written in these books were "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

These facts have no unimportant bearing upon the critical theory. They do not directly contradict it, it is to be confessed. But such width of view, such insight into God's dealings, do not harmonize

with the definite and somewhat narrow aims and purposes, with which that theory asserts the Pentateuch to have been composed.

Passing on to the second object, viz., The promotion and enforcement of God's orderly worship, and of His worship alone, the authors seem utterly to miss their mark here. For orderly worship, a carefully-arranged code of laws was necessary. The laws of the Pentateuch are anything but this. You have laws intermixed with the history, laws repeated, laws inserted, apparently, as they were given by God, or as the need arose. In its lack of arrangement, it is just the book which Moses might have been supposed to write during the desert wanderings, when he had to bear the burden of the people alone. But Ezra—to take the sacerdotal legislation only, of which he is said to be the author—wanted a working code for certain definite purposes. It is strange he could not have contrived something better. When we examine his work, we find he has been more anxious to give his laws and precepts an antique form, than to make them practical, working laws. He stamps the mark of the wilderness so deeply on his laws, that they are often, without adaptation, unfit for use in the Promised Land. He seems to study confusion. He mixes the history which illustrates his law, and the laws which enforce the teaching of his history. Considering his circumstances and his very practical purpose, we can find no excuse for him; unless, indeed, we hold that his object was to forge a book which would com-

pletely deceive, rather than a law which would really work.⁽¹⁰⁾

And yet Ezra is not a clumsy workman ; he is a consummate artist. He is able to invent narratives which presuppose his laws, and to contrive coincidences which appear to be undesigned. Take the narrative of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, as an instance. Here he is inventing a narrative to enforce his law by which the sons of Aaron are distinguished from the other Levites—one of the main objects of his work. As you will remember, this is said to have been the Jewish way of writing history. Now it is plain there would be no difficulty in framing a simple narrative embodying a Divine punishment on Levitical discontent. But Ezra's plan is most subtle. He joins the Reubenites and Levites in one conspiracy. There he makes one point. The Reubenites and Levites, we find, were close neighbours in the desert encampments. Better still, he joins two tribes together which might be supposed to have similar causes of discontent. The Reubenites would be jealous for that priesthood which was theirs by right of birth ; the Levites would be jealous for that priesthood which had been given the whole tribe for their faithfulness at Sinai. Mark what a genius Ezra has. When he writes, the Levites are smarting under a recent wrong ; they have had the priesthood for centuries, and it has just been taken away from them. The jealousy of the Reubenites, on the other hand, is a remote tradition, or possibly an invention of Ezra's brain. Ezra pieces together

in this marvellous fashion this actual, present jealousy of Levi, with this remote, hypothetical jealousy of Reuben, so as to give his story a semblance of truth. He is bold as well as subtle. He strikes at the most famous of all the Levitical families, the family of Korah, a name which his descendants had brought to honour. He is so bold as to be careless, for, at first sight, he leaves us to imagine that Korah's family, so famous in after history, was wholly destroyed along with their father. Was Ezra, or anyone else, capable of thus fitting his history to his laws? If not, we must remember that this narrative alone, if true, brings back the sacerdotal legislation to the Mosaic times.⁽¹¹⁾

Hitherto we have been considering difficulties in the way of the composition of the laws of the Pentateuch so many centuries after the times of Moses. We proceed now to consider the difficulties in the way of their acceptance (if so composed) by the people. That acceptance must be admitted to have been ready and universal. There is no trace of any opposing voice. The Jews received their history from the unknown prophet. They received the Deuteronomic Code from Jeremiah or one of his contemporaries. They received their sacerdotal legislation, involving numerous and burdensome ceremonies, from Ezra. There was not one who said, This is not what it claims to be. Our fathers knew nothing of these laws, neither will we. Certainly all will agree that such an imposition of laws upon a nation is unique in history. It may be too much to say that it is *a priori* impossible or inconceivable. It is not too much to say that it is highly improbable.⁽¹²⁾

Of course, on the traditional theory it must be admitted that there was a period, longer or shorter, in which knowledge of some of the Pentateuchal laws was lost. King Josiah's surprise when the book of the Law was read to him sufficiently proves this. But Ezra and his predecessors together worked a complete revolution in the religion, the priesthood, and the customs of the people. They had to convert to their view not a young king bent on reform, anxious to go back to the ancient paths; but they had to convert a whole nation, an Eastern nation, tenacious of old customs, disliking reforms. To effect this great task, the influence of the prophets at first, and of Ezra and his co-workers afterwards, must have been overwhelming. The people must have been willing to accept on their authority, and without inquiry, any code of laws said to have come from the hand of Moses. The history is against this assumption. The prophets had to wage an unceasing struggle with the nation. The prophetic influence was divided. Against the true prophets the false prophets were arrayed. These latter would undoubtedly scrutinize severely any book, claiming to be ancient, but generally unknown, which the former said they had found.⁽¹³⁾

And, again, this theory implies, not only partial, not only widespread, but universal ignorance of the ancient laws and past history of the nation. Now, if we can find traces of a class of men whose business it was to study and to guard the law of God; if further we find that they boast it is in their peculiar posses-

sion ; if, further still, we find the teaching of this class opposed to the teaching of the prophetic school, in which the Pentateuch is said to have been composed : then we have a class of experts whose knowledge was such that they could not be deceived, whose opposition to prophetic teaching made them quick to expose prophetic forgeries. Such men were the scribes in later times ; can any like them be found before the Captivity ? We may find them, I think, in the Book of Jeremiah. There were men in his time, teachers of ancient truths, to whom the people appealed against Jeremiah. "The law, they said, should not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet." Here, then, you have different forms of religious teaching and different kinds of religious teachers. It is not necessary for us to determine the exact forms of religious teaching indicated by the expressions used. It is sufficient to notice that we have here teachers, orders of teachers, teachers of the religion of Jehovah, teachers presumably acquainted with that religion as it had been practised during generations, teachers opposed to Jeremiah on some important and fundamental points. The recently discovered and professedly ancient Book of Deuteronomy (and books like it) would not pass unscrutinized by men like these. It opposed their principles and practices. If they had never heard of it previously, they would suspect and hope it was not genuine, and do their best to prove it. Further, and this seems of more importance, in the Book of Jeremiah, men are found corresponding in name, in work, and in corruption, to the scribes

as we find them in later times. They said, "We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us." Like the later scribes, they made their boast in the law. Of them Jeremiah says, "The lying pen of scribes has made it (the law of Jehovah) a lie." So here you have evidence of literary activity, and literary activity on religious subjects. You have scribes engaged in the characteristic work of their namesakes of later times, the study of law—*i.e.*, the law or (if it so preferred) the doctrine of Jehovah. Their faults in later times also appear. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. They boasted in their possession of the letter of the law, but they failed to realize its spirit. They turned, by their interpretations, the truth of God into a lie.⁽¹⁴⁾

We pass on to consider the main line of the evidence on which the critical theory of the law rests.

The great historical argument against the traditional theory of the laws contained in the Pentateuch is this: The Law, as a whole, never becomes the law of Israel's life till after the times of the Exile. Certain provisions in it seem to have been systematically disobeyed. From this undoubted fact it is argued that the law cannot have existed before the Exile. The force of the argument lies in this: The Law, or certain parts of it, is disobeyed, not only in times of anarchy, but when the kingdom is firm and settled; not in times of idolatry only, but in times of the revival of the worship of God. Divinely appointed

deliverers of the nation, prophets whose duty it was to enforce obedience to God's commands, Kings concerning whom it is witnessed that they did that which was right in the sight of the Lord—all, in certain particulars, disobey the law as we possess it. It is to be remembered that, so acting, they were defying no human authority, but God Himself. This argument has been called the "corner stone of the critical hypothesis," and such no doubt it is. It is an argument of considerable strength. But is it strong enough to bear the superstructure based upon it?⁽¹⁵⁾

Now, in considering this argument, the first thought that strikes us is naturally this, What quality must a law have in order that it may be readily obeyed? It will not be enough for us to consider the goodness of the law, we must pursue our inquiry further. We must not only consider the law in itself, but also in its relations on the one hand to its giver and the circumstances of its promulgation, and on the other hand to the people for whom it is made. A law may be good in itself and yet be unsuitable for certain circumstances. It may be too good or too high for people in a low state of moral or political development. It may, on the other hand, derive especial force from the great name of the lawgiver. It may be recommended to the people by its connexion with some prosperous or honourable era in their history. Plainly this obedience-compelling quality of a law is of a complex nature. Many considerations have to be taken into account.

The application of these considerations to the present case is not quite certain. We may begin by assuming that laws given by God are necessarily good. Doubtless they are, and yet we must not make this assertion without qualifications. If we were to say that the Law of Moses was a parenthesis in God's dealings with the human race, if we were to call its provisions weak and beggarly elements, if we were to call it a yoke of bondage, if we were to exult that we are delivered from its curse, we should do so on the authority of St. Paul. If we were to say that the law was but a shadow of coming good and not the very image, that it could make nothing perfect, that it had to be abolished because of its weakness and unprofitableness, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews would bear us out. If we were to say that the statutes were not good, and that the commandments were such that the children of Israel could not live by them, we should be using the words of a prophet of the Old Covenant. It seems as if some of the precepts of the Law of Moses were given in God's wrath, after the apostacy of the golden calf. They were a yoke of bondage which the children of Israel were never able to bear. They were intended to prepare the way for something better by their own grievousness and futility. The Law prepared the people for the Christ, in some such a way as the darkness prepared the Gentiles for the Light. This weakness, this burdensomeness of The Law is a consideration not to be overlooked, and will account in part for the repeated rebellions of the children of Israel. But its importance

must not be over-rated. We must take our stand on the assertion that "The Law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

When we consider the Mosaic Law in reference to its Giver and its promulgation, we must at once confess that never was any law promulgated with such imperative claims for acceptance. God, not man, claims to be the Author. And He speaks when Israel should have been ready to hear. He has lately manifested His power by signs and wonders in Egypt. He has magnified His love for His people by their wonderful redemption. He comes down upon Sinai, and manifests His presence by the fire, the thunder, and the cloud. His awful voice is heard enunciating the Ten Words. The mediator, Moses, through whom the other laws are given, is closely connected in the people's minds with former and present deliverances. His face catches a glow from the Divine glory into which he is admitted.

Never, we admit, could a law have been promulgated more forcibly.^(16.) But even a Divine Author and a promulgation from heaven itself are not sufficient to compel obedience to laws. The most important factor for this end is to be found, not in the law, nor in its Author, but in the people for whom it is made. Laws have to be assimilated, or they will not be willingly obeyed. "It is not enough," says Professor Robertson Smith, "that God should declare His will and love to men. The declaration required to be incorporated with the daily lessons of

ordinary life—to be woven into the personal experience of humanity, to become part of the atmosphere of moral and intellectual influences which surrounds every man's existence.”⁽¹⁷⁾

These are true words. Indeed, they have a truth, a force, an application, which their author does not give them. In them we may find a clue to the solution of the difficulties of the Old Testament problem.

If we accept the traditionary theory of the composition of the Old Testament, we shall see that the difficulties of the assimilation of the Law of Moses by the Israelites were exceptionally great. In ordinary cases the code of laws grows with the national life. Laws are enacted as they are wanted. Experience frames them. Further, when they receive willing obedience, they are in some sense a product of the nation itself. If an external or a superior force promulgates laws for which the nation has not asked explicitly or implicitly, obedience may be compelled, but it will not be freely given.

Now, we have no similar historical instance in which a code of laws was, as it were, born full grown, or which was enacted with so little previous preparation and education for it.⁽¹⁸⁾ The code of Lycurgus suggests a comparison, but it was based on the experience of cognate nations, and it was begged for by a nation whose past experience of anarchy had caused it to feel the need of law. No doubt in the Law of Moses analogies to the customs of

kindred nations may be found. No doubt it was based on earlier customs and laws of the people of Israel itself. But, on the other hand, it made important modifications and alterations in those customs, and much of it was new. The bonds of law had been loose among those nomad tribes, henceforth they were drawn tightly. Much of the code must have been galling to their untamed spirits; much of it must have been wholly incomprehensible, a trial to their faith and obedience. They did not, for they had not the qualifications, look upon it from inside; they did not grasp its spirit. It set a standard of faith and practice far beyond their attainments, or even aspirations. More than all this, it cut sharply across some of their ancient customs and habits. So here you have a great external force entering into all the spheres of conduct, acting on the nation rather than in it. No doubt it came with great authority, but the children of Israel were hardly able to appreciate that authority. No doubt the law was good, but its goodness would be disliked. It would be regarded, not as good, nor as divine, but as a check on natural lusts and passions; as a restraint on what might seem harmless freedom of action. Is there any wonder that it was not accepted as a whole for centuries? Is there any wonder that the process of assimilation was slow and tedious, with many drawbacks?⁽¹⁹⁾

The circumstances of the early years of the history of Israel after their settlement in Canaan were not favourable to the assimilation of the law.

There was no strong, central, and continuous authority for 400 years after the Exodus. The comment of the historian of the time is, "There was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes."⁽²⁰⁾ Again, there was no systematic education of the people in the precepts of the law for the same period. The law was not constantly being brought home to the people's hearts. Its teachers were few. Its copies fewer still. That laws should lie dormant, nay, should be wholly ignored, is no uncommon experience even in firmly established kingdoms and in well regulated households. This is the case even when the law has been recently enacted and is well known to all. Amongst ourselves custom often overrules law, although the written laws are accessible to all. This was much more likely to be the case in the East, where tradition is so strong; and in those early times, when few had read, or had even heard read, the book of the law of God. The experience of every household teaches the same truth. How many family rules are laid by rather than laid down? Rightly they are in force, actually they are kept in the back ground. It is understood they ought to be guides to conduct, but obedience is not insisted upon. If this is the case in families under strict control, is it wonderful that the Jews should have transgressed laws, so little known to them, and so little understood?

When, then, we find certain laws of Moses were neglected and ignored even by the good and holy, we do not see in this neglect a proof of the non-exist-

ence of such laws, but rather an undesigned evidence for the truth of the narrative. The Israelites acted as human experience would have led us to expect. The law, given out at one time, was not taken in at one time. The force of tradition and long established custom (a peculiarly powerful force in the East) proved too strong for the law. The early times of ignorance God overlooked. It was not till the nation was full grown that the guilt of transgression became intolerable. As the spiritual life of the nation or of individuals developed, they began to live up to the laws of God. Experience brought home the dangers against which God had guarded beforehand. At last the lessons of the law were learnt, and soon after, its work accomplished, it gave place to higher things.

There is one Law, the Law against the high Places, the neglect of which is often quoted in support of the critical theory. There is no doubt about the fact. The best of kings, up to Hezekiah and Josiah, acted as if they knew nothing about it. It is hence argued that it cannot have been in existence from Moses' time.

When we consider this law we see that there were special reasons why it should not be observed. The Law of the One Sanctuary drew tight the national bonds, and for centuries Israel was little more than a confederation of tribes. It put its veto on ancient customs ; there were many places round which holy memories had arisen, places at which the fathers of the race had called upon the name of Jehovah. It

opposed a good deal of practical heathenism, for many of the Israelites were inclined to limit the sphere of Jehovah's influence. If they had their God, other nations had theirs also, and the difference was in degree rather than in kind.⁽²¹⁾

Further, the Law of the one Sanctuary must have seemed a most inconvenient restriction of freedom of approach to God. Sometimes the Israelite would desire to offer a sacrifice to his God without delay, but no sacrifice could be offered without a long and sometimes dangerous journey. The reason for the prohibition would not be obvious, and the command regarded as unreasonable is quickly disobeyed. It is too much for us to go up to Jerusalem, would be the discontented murmur of many an Israelite before Jeroboam made the removal of the grievance a support of his schismatical worship. After the capture of the ark by the Philistines and the destruction of Shiloh, the place of the one sanctuary might be regarded as uncertain. The law might be looked upon as obsolete, unfitted to the altered circumstances of the times. Though not formally repealed by God's word, it might be regarded as practically repealed by His providential dealings.

In due time, practical experience proved that God's laws cannot be violated with impunity. The reason for the formal precept became apparent. The worship of the high places was both idolatrous and immoral; it was the strength of the heathen worship in Israel. When the prophets saw this in their daily experience; when they further saw by the study of the ancient

books that the worship, practically so harmful, was formally forbidden ; they may, likely enough, have stirred up the kings, Hezekiah and Josiah, to put the forgotten law in force?

It is to be noticed that the suggestion, if made, does not appear in the prophetical Books. The weapons of the prophets are not carnal, but spiritual. They never say that worship at the one altar in Jerusalem is the remedy for the nation's disease. They looked deeper than that. It is not the violation of the ceremonial, but of the moral law, over which they mourn. It is not the better ordering of the sacrifices, but the better ordering of the heart and affections on which they insist. Would Jeremiah, think you, have regarded a return to the one shrine in Jerusalem as a return to God? On the contrary, it is the pollutions of the worship of that sanctuary, it is the corruptions of the devout worshippers who worship there, which stir his soul to its inmost depths, and which cause him to denounce an evil irreversible, swiftly approaching, sweeping away all. It is remarkable that Jeremiah took, as far as we know, no part in the practical measures of Josiah's reformation. He watched that reformation, but he seems to have regarded it as all insufficient. The high places are swept away, but the black cloud of wrath does not disperse. The temple and her services are free from all idolatrous taint ; still he has no hope, for the worshippers are unpurged from their guilt. He strives to awaken the conscience of his people, and he utterly fails ; so the iniquity of Israel abides, although her

high places are removed. He certainly has hopes for the future, but they are not connected with the old covenant at all. He sees it replaced by a new and a better one. The time is coming when men will no longer say, "The ark of the covenant of the Lord." It will have gone, but it will not be missed, for it will be replaced by something better. Instead of one sanctuary there will be many. God's law will be written in men's hearts, and a kingdom of righteousness and peace will be set up for ever.⁽²²⁾

Was this the man, or the sort of man, to be devising ceremonial enactments? Was this the man who would attempt to make Israel pious by promulgating a law? Could he, whose only hope was in the new covenant, have taken such a part in bolstering up the old? On the critical theory, Deuteronomy is written with the great object of putting down the worship of the high places.⁽²³⁾ Jeremiah was at least an accomplice in its composition. Does not his book, acknowledged to be unmistakably genuine, give from end to end the lie to the accusation? To cleanse the high places was to cleanse the outside of the cup and the platter. He sought to remove idolatry from the nation's heart and life.

Another argument against ascribing the Law of the one Sanctuary to the prophets of Jeremiah's time may be stated thus: A new law restricting ancient freedom was unnatural, and was alien from the spirit of the prophetic work.

At the time of the Exodus, in the infancy of the nation, the law was most necessary, and would have been, if obeyed, most salutary. The unity of God and the unity of the nation were ideas most imperfectly realized at that time. They were taught most forcibly by the worship of God in one place, according to one fixed rule. To worship on every high mountain and under every green tree was to appropriate the Canaanite places of worship; it was, by a natural consequence, to appropriate both the false gods and their immoral rites.

But the law was one of those of which St. Paul speaks when he says, "We, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world." Freedom of worship was to be granted when men were able to bear it. The hour was coming, and it has now come, when God's name would be placed everywhere; when, neither on Mount Gerizim, nor yet at Jerusalem, but in all places, men would worship the Father.

We can see then, that the law of the one shrine was most wise and natural in the times of the Exodus. We can see also that its enforcement was natural in the later times, when the bad results of its violation had been made so clear. But the critical theory involves unnatural consequences. You suppose freedom when the nation is in its childhood, and bondage after it has grown up into its manhood. You have a false development—a wrong order of things. The prophetic work, as ascertained by their own writings, is towards freedom from law,

the freedom fully realized in Christ. To impose such a restriction was alien from their spirit, alien from their work.⁽²⁴⁾

It may be freely admitted that the relations of the people to the Mosaic Law changed in the times of the later kings. The Law was obeyed in the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah as it had never been obeyed before, or at least since the days of Joshua. Laws which had been ignored or forgotten suddenly appear in full force.⁽²⁵⁾ This fact may be explained in one of two ways. Either the laws had changed or the spirit of the people. We have seen reasons for refusing the first explanation, can we find any support for the second? We may find some, I think, by considering the notices of Sabbath observance during this period.

The institution of the Sabbath forms part of the ten words in their original form, and so, according to the critics, part of the truly Mosaic legislation.⁽²⁶⁾ It is, indeed, according to Kuenen, one of the connecting links between the worship of Jehovah and primitive idolatrous worship. He thinks it is impossible that it can be an invention of later times. "In the centuries after Moses," he says "we do not find any period at which the consecration of the seventh day, a custom involving a radical change in the whole national life, can have been introduced."⁽²⁷⁾ In the eighth century B.C. we find the Sabbath Institution in both kingdoms of Israel and Judah. (2 Kings iv. 23, 2 Kings xi. 5—7.) But this is its earliest mention since the times of Moses. It must have existed, as we see, but it is never

spoken of. When the earliest prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah (in his earlier prophecies), speak of it, they place it side by side with days of less importance ; new moons, days of assembly, feasts, of which the ten words make no mention. And then suddenly, the Sabbath becomes a prominent institution. To keep it is to keep the whole law. No longer is it joined with minor holy days. It stands alone. The profanation of the Sabbath is marked out as one of the grievous sins of the age, bringing down God's vengeance and destruction upon Jerusalem. Special blessings are promised to those who hallowed it. Kings and queens would pass through the gates of Jerusalem, and the city would remain for ever, if they brought no burden through its gates on the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it, and did no work therein. The Sabbath institution once established remains permanent! After the captivity we find Nehemiah making its observance one of the chief points of his reformation. Jewish strictness on this point is so well known to other nations that they utilize the day in times of war for making their attacks.⁽²³⁾

Here, then, we have a marked change of tone in the Jewish nation and amongst Jewish teachers with respect to a law of God. It is very similar in character to the change which passes over the people with respect to other institutions, which are ascribed, for that reason, by the critics to a late date. Further, the changes in both cases occur at the same time—the times of Manasseh and Josiah—and so may well have had the same cause. If the Sabbath ordinance must have

been in existence previously, the other ordinances may have been. The change then, we infer, was not in the law of Israel, but in the people of Israel. At this time the law of God and their national life were brought into closer connexion with one another.

Another argument against the critical theory may be drawn from the rewards and punishments of the Mosaic Law. It has long been a subject of remark that the Law of Moses is based on temporal rewards and punishments. All the hopes of good men, all the fears of bad men, are made to centre round that good land which Jehovah had promised to their fathers. If they were obedient, then they would live long in a prosperous land. If they were rebellious, then they would lose their land, or their land would lose its fertility. Eternal Life, Eternal Death, are never held out to their hopes or to their fears. The fact is remarkable and has received various explanations. These need not concern us now. We may notice the undoubted fact from a different point of view. It points to a time when the prospect of a future life was too doubtful and indistinct to be relied upon as a motive of action. It suits a nation in its childhood. The fears and hopes by which a child is guided must be suited to his contracted vision. They must not be too tremendous, or he will not realize them. They must relate to the things with which he is acquainted, or he will not understand them. They must not be too far off, or he will not feel them. The requitals of the Mosaic Law are thus seen to be suitable to Mosaic

times. Later on in the history of the nation the idea of a future life had taken more definite shape. The Jewish nation had grown in its grasp of spiritual truth.⁽²⁹⁾

But more than this can be said, the requitals of the Mosaic Law are absolutely unsuitable to the time at which, on the critical theory, that Law was compiled. After the captivity the hopes and fears of the chosen people never centred in their Promised Land. The bond of union was not a common country but a common religion. It mattered little to the rich Jew in Babylon whether the barns in Palestine were full and plenteous with all manner of store. Banishment from the Promised Land was no punishment to be denounced upon those who were voluntary exiles. And yet, strange to say, it was just this period when it is said the Mosaic Law was written. Spiritual hopes were comparatively clear and bright, but they are not used in support of obedience. Hopes and fears connected with their own land had lost their influence with the greater number, and yet on these the Law makes its sanctions rest. Even if the Law was composed by one of those who made Jerusalem his home, it was accepted with equal reverence by the exiles of Babylon. And yet its threats and promises they alike despised.

Another argument of weight may be drawn from the ultimate fates of the ten tribes and the tribe of Judah. Both kingdoms, so long as they lasted, were the objects of God's special care. To Israel as well as

to Judah prophets were sent. Both kingdoms fell away from their God, but Judah remained faithful longer than Israel. Both kingdoms were alike the object of God's chastisement; but Judah retained its nationality in that chastisement, whilst the ten tribes were absorbed into the nations round about them. Nor is this to be attributed to the fact that permission was not given to the ten tribes to return to their native land, but only to the tribe of Judah. The Jews who remained in Babylon never lost their nationality, for they never lost their faith. The Jews, who were in later times dispersed all over the world, were never absorbed amongst the heathen around them. A cause for this marked difference of destiny may rather be found in this, that the Jews held by their Divine Law, whilst the ten tribes repudiated it. The Jews had a law, they had a priesthood, they had sacrifices ordained by God; they had these, at least in memory and hope, during their seventy years of captivity. These were their bonds of union, these separated them from the nations in whose lands they were. But the ten tribes had only Jeroboam's counterfeits, and such are of no avail in the evil day. History tells us that a disaster hurls a usurper from his throne; he cannot stand against misfortune, and his people, having no leader, fall along with him. On the other hand, the times of trouble cause the people to rally round their rightful sovereign with feelings of enthusiastic loyalty. The nation's life burns deep. So in the captivity the usurping calf worship ceased, and the calf worshippers disappeared. The people of the northern

kingdom were half heathen before they were scattered amongst the heathen, they were mingled amongst the heathen and learned their works. At last they were absorbed amongst the heathen and were lost. On the other hand, the times of adversity bound upon the Jews the worship of Jehovah according to the Mosaic Law, as a sign upon their hands and as frontlets between their eyes. They never learnt to love their law until they were punished for breaking it. They never became truly separate from the nations until they were dispersed amongst them. This seems certain ; no new law, no new teaching, no invention of the times of the captivity, could have formed this bond of union, this preservative of the nation's life. Institutions which date from the time of a nation's adversity can never excite enthusiasm, or become objects of passionate attachment. More generally they are objects of unreasonable dislike. It is plain that captive Judah turned to its forgotten law, because that law recalled the ancient prosperity and the secret of that prosperity to its recollection ; because that law like an ancient tree had taken deep root amongst them ; because it was connected with the brightest history ; because obedience to it had been in former times the secret of their strength.

In conclusion, what are we to think of the morality of the transaction in which the prophets and their successors are said to have been engaged ? The immorality, the impiety of those forgeries in the name of God, is treated as a very light matter by the modern critics. We should be wrong, they say, in

supposing there existed in those days the high standard of morality which exists in our own.⁽³⁰⁾ This may be so, but we must remember we are dealing, not with men who held the opinions of their time on these matters, but with the teachers of morality,—aye, the great teachers of morality—the teachers of morality not only in their own but in all ages. It is idle to say that when they used the names of great men of former times they had no intention to deceive. It is idle to say that they were using a transparent literary artifice, and the like. On the contrary, they used Moses' name to conjure with, because their own was not strong enough. Their intentions must be gathered from the result. They did deceive, and that all men. It is false to say that they thought little of using the formula, Thus saith the Lord, when the Lord had not spoken. Their anathemas are directed against those who speak out of their own spirit and out of their own heart. They denounce those who used Jehovah's name to recommend their own words. The prophets were not the great and noble men they seemed to be if they were capable of acting in such a way. Their words, their lives teach us, and that with no uncertain sound, that no work however good, no obedience however complete, no religious observances however correct, are acceptable to God unless they be joined with a pure and perfect heart. Can we believe that the great work of the prophets so completely belied their high teaching and noble profession? The reputations of our teachers are dear to us. And they are our teachers; we have sat from childhood at their feet. The men

of high and noble thoughts cannot have been men of crooked and underhand actions. From an intellectual point of view the work attributed to the prophets was beyond them. The task was beyond their strength. From a moral point of view their work was beneath them. These great spiritual teachers can never have sunk so low.

THE WRITINGS OF THE PROPHETS OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY B.C.

The writings of the prophets of the eighth century B.C. have a most important place assigned to them on the critical theory. They are accepted as genuine and authentic. They are reckoned to be the earliest uncorrupted Hebrew writings which have come down to us. They provide us with a criterion by which we may discern early teaching from late, the history from the myth.

The religious teaching contained in these books is very remarkable. When "without the shadow of a doubt" ⁽¹⁾ a specific difference between Israel's religion and its sister's is denied, the challenge may be given to produce from any of the old world religions, teaching comparable to this. When the assertion is hazarded that the separate parts of the Old Testament speak loudly for a *natural development* of the Israelitish religion, then the modern critics may be asked to trace that natural process of which the prophetic teaching is the result. ⁽¹⁾

The question proposed to be discussed here is, Can the prophetic teaching of the eighth century be accounted for on the critical theory?

We may begin by stating the chief points of this teaching. The religion of the eighth century prophets is a Monotheism. They teach that Jehovah is the one only God to all the kingdoms of the earth. Compared with Him, all others called gods have no real existence. His dominion is supreme in heaven and in earth. His providential care is exercised over things small and great, over each individual, and over all the nations of the world. He is clearly distinguished from all other beings by His nature; the separation between Creator and creature is fundamental. Although all nations are under His care, He has special relations with Israel,

and these of a most tender and loving kind. To them He has revealed His will, and they are under special obligations to worship and serve him. That worship and service must be in the highest sense spiritual. It must not be paid through the medium of a graven image, that is an abomination to Him. Though it is paid with sacrifices and burnt offerings, it is not these which He specially requires of their hands. He desires mercy and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. He asks of them no more than this, to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with their God. (2)

Two remarks with respect to the prophets' teaching may here be made. First, it is a system with a considerable degree of completeness. We have not merely germs of truth, not merely the enunciation of great principles ; but we have a doctrine of God which has been thought out in various relations. Monotheistic doctrine is stated in its connection with the facts of nature and the duties of man, and in its opposition to other systems. Later prophets add nothing here. Second, the prophet's teaching concerning God's nature, and the spirituality of His worship and service is of a most remarkable character. The question, How did the prophets arrive at it, demands an answer. It will probably be admitted that the teachers of no other nation of that time were within sight of the truths so clearly taught by the prophets. It will be admitted also that foreign influence on prophetic thought, so far as it was exerted, was mischievous and misleading. So the field of our enquiry is considerably narrowed. The records of the Israelitish people alone can guide us to the sources of prophetic teaching.(3)

Now let us examine the critical explanation of prophetic teaching. To do so we must sketch the religious history of Israel from the first, as they read it.

Our enquiry may begin with Moses, for up to his time the Israelites are said to have been alike in theory and practice polytheists. Jehovah was the national God, but tribal gods were worshipped along with Him.(4)

It was Moses who gave the first impulse to the subsequent development of the religion of Israel. This he did in two ways ;

(1) He chose Jehovah for the *sole* object of his adoration, and he imposed this as a law upon Israel.

(2) He taught that Jehovah was a *holy* God, who demanded of His worshippers moral obedience. The genuine law of Moses is "the ten words," and it is a moral code.

Moses was not however a monotheist. He had only a deep sense of Jehovah's might and glory, and His superiority to the gods of other nations. He had not fully realized the essential distinction between Jehovah and nature. Jehovah's very essence seemed to him to manifest itself in light and fire. He may have opposed image worship indirectly, but he did not definitely forbid it. ⁽⁵⁾

The time of the Judges was not favourable to any advance in religious ideas. Samuel is the next great teacher. To him is due the subordination of the estatic, Canaanitish element of prophecy to the religious and ethical element. Zeal for Jehovah was Samuel's chief characteristic ; but it was of a national type, and manifested itself chiefly in persecuting the Canaanites. His conception of Jehovah was not spiritual, and was very inferior to that of later times. ⁽⁶⁾

Of all the great characters of the Old Testament David loses most on the critical theory. David the man after God's own heart, David the great spiritual teacher of the Psalms, is a mythical personage. The real David is not a man of spiritual ideas. Nothing is clearer than that he believes that with the ark he is bringing Jehovah to his capital. It is true Jehovah is holy and righteous, but he is a God whose righteous wrath may be appeased by the smell of a meat offering. David's morals and theology are alike low, and in sympathy with the spirit of his half-barbarous age. ⁽⁷⁾

Solomon did not recognize Jehovah as the *only* true God. "He—with most of his contemporaries and the generations immediately succeeding them—was altogether strange to that exclusiveness

according to which the historian judges his conduct." The ornamentation of the temple proved that its founder did not recognize any distinction in essence between Jehovah and other gods, particularly those of Phœnicia. His reign and his father's connected in the peoples' minds the worship of Jehovah with national victories and glories. This was their contribution to Israel's religious development. (8)

Jeroboam's golden bull worship was not a new cult. It was only a state establishment of a worship well-known and continuously practised from the remotest times. In his policy Jeroboam could reckon upon the approbation and applause of the vast majority of his subjects. *Possibly*, however, the prophets of his time would have preferred a form of worship without images. (9)

In the times of the dynasty of Ahab the question was whether Jehovah or Baal should be the national God. To Elijah and his school the triumph of Jehovah worship is due. But none of the prophets raise their voice against the image worship of Dan and Bethel. Jehu and his dynasty, who maintained that worship, are supported by them. (10)

About fifty years after the death of Elisha the eighth century prophets appear. Amos is the first, and he is closely followed by Hoshea, Micah, and Isaiah. During these fifty years a change in the religious idea has been accomplished, which might almost be called a revolution. The spiritual sense of the servants of Jehovah was quickened by adversity. They placed side by side the religious condition and the temporal reverses of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. They traced the one to the other. Jehovah had said, "Thou shalt have none other Gods but me," and Israel had disobeyed the command. This the prophets discerned to be the sin which had brought the punishment. They proceeded to compare the character of Jehovah with that of other gods. In this respect a distinction had been recognized from the beginning, and had been shewn by the moral character of Jehovah's law. They grasped afresh this distinction which had been lost sight of, and further developed it. The difference in character became, in their concep-

tion, a difference in nature. They learned to regard the moral character of Jehovah, His specific difference from other gods, as the essential part of His nature. Material ideas formerly connected with Him were laid aside. Then the heathen gods, being regarded as different in nature from Jehovah, were denied to be true gods at all. Thus monotheistic doctrine was established on a moral basis. The change in prophetic theology necessitated a change in their idea of worship. To a God whose nature was so regarded, *spiritual* worship and service were plainly due. He could neither be represented by images, nor honoured by material offerings. The nature of God and the nature of His worship must correspond.⁽¹¹⁾

In this way the teaching of the prophets of the eighth century B.C. is accounted for by the critical theory. What does the account come to? Simply this. The prophetic teaching is a return to, and an immediate deduction from, Mosaic principles. From the sketch we have given it will be at once seen that during seven centuries no teacher had added anything to Moses. Samuel gave to the religion of Jehovah a powerful school of teachers; David and Solomon gave it the prestige of success; Elijah and Elisha rescued it from imminent ruin; but none of them even equalled Moses in the spirituality of their teaching. Moses enunciated the first commandment, but Solomon, his contemporaries and the succeeding generations, worshipped other gods along with Jehovah. Moses had at least disliked image worship, Elijah and his school connived at it. Moses had grasped the great truth that Jehovah required moral obedience from His worshippers, but David thought He could be propitiated by a material sacrifice. Samuel nowhere clearly states any of the great truths which Moses taught. The practical result of the teaching of centuries on the masses was that the fundamental question was still to be decided, Shall Jehovah be our God at all, or shall he not rather be Baal, the nature god, with his sensual worship?

So then the teaching of the prophets has not been led up to in any way. On the contrary, prophets and people have departed further and further from pure Jehovah worship and from Mosaic

principles. Then, without any preparation whatsoever, those principles appear fully developed and systematized, and the erroneous elements have been purged away. The prophets of the eighth century might to all intents and purposes be Moses' immediate successors. The intervening ages had done nothing whatever to bridge over the gulf between the two. True it is said that affliction had sharpened spiritual insight. Was this a fact? History and the prophetic books abundantly testify that the rise of the prophetic school synchronized with a period of great national prosperity. But admitting that the remembrance of recent afflictions had this effect, and that they were thus led to contrast these adversities "with the prosperity which had been enjoyed not only under David and Solomon, but also under the succeeding kings," ⁽¹²⁾ would the contrast have led them to monotheism? On the contrary, the popular religion of those reigns had been polytheistic, and Solomon's idol temples still stood to tell them what his religious policy had been. Plainly the contrast between former prosperity and present adversity would have led them wrong.

Our investigation has brought us to this conclusion. The prophetic teaching of the eighth century is an immediate and direct deduction from principles contained in Moses' ten words; in the making of this deduction no assistance whatever had been given by intermediate teachers, and no sufficient impulse had been given by the circumstances of the time. Have we here a probable account of the prophetic teaching? Can it have been deduced, in the manner described, from these principles? The line of thought as drawn by the critics may seem easy to us, we may think that no one could miss their way. It is to be remembered, however, that all Moses' successors hitherto had missed it. The mere fact of their so missing it had increased the difficulty for those who came after them. On critical principles it must be regarded as certain that the ten words were not reckoned to be the sum and substance of Mosaic teaching in the eighth century. Moses' name would necessarily be connected long before this with many other precepts and principles far less pure and spiritual. Whole generations had corruptly interpreted his words and deprived

them of their significance. Some of these misinterpretations would be attached to Moses' name. To clear Moses' teaching from later corrupt additions was a task for the critics, not for the prophets.

But we are told we must not commit the error "of attributing to those pious men a purely intellectual consideration." "The great contention between Javeh and his rivals was decided before the tribunal of the feelings rather than before that of the intellect." It was then, it appears, the prophet's feelings which guided him. He felt his way back to the original Mosaic principles, and into separating himself from the national and traditional interpretation of them. Former teachers of his nation had developed their national or material side, and the consequence had been polytheism and apostasy. He meditated in his heart upon their spiritual and universal side, "A light, as it were, arose on his soul," and he thus arrived at ethical monotheism. It is interesting to know that this is what is meant by "a natural process," "a natural development," "a growth analogous to the growth of natural science or the evolutions of the æsthetic sense."⁽¹³⁾

We have said "he," as if he were one man—as if there was one great founder of the prophetic school. But it is to be remembered that it is not *one* person alone who travels along this road—a road which had not been trodden by the Israelites heretofore. The great mass of the people, no doubt, went on in their old ways; but this new, this entirely new course, is taken independently by several. There are at least four great teachers of the eighth century. They are, as we have seen, independent of all that has gone before for generations; for the religious development of the nation has proceeded on wrong lines. They are also independent of one another; each for himself purifies Mosaic principles from the corruptions of ages, and each for himself develops those principles in exactly the same way; or, if the mode of expression be preferred, each independently feels himself into the same system of truth. There are, of course, differences in tone and feeling between those four teachers, but it is not asserted that there is any difference of doctrine. Their agreement is complete, but it is the result of independent meditations.

And, says Kuenen, "we have not a moment's hesitation" in regarding "the new conception as their creation."⁽¹⁴⁾ Strange to say, what he regards as new, they think to be old. What he regards as their creation, they are convinced is only a restoration. They proclaim their new doctrine to their contemporaries; but they do not say, "Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you:" "The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Such words they should have used; but instead, they charge their people with wilfully departing from their God. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, much more should Israel. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for your iniquities." It is needless to multiply instances, the fact will be admitted. The prophet was not conscious of the development that had passed through his own mind. He thought he was restoring the true worship of God not merely as it existed seven hundred years before; but as it had flourished in the days of David, two hundred and fifty years before; as it had been practised by the pious, since Israel was a nation even to that day.

The critical explanation of the prophetic teaching is, indeed, a strange one. The prophets took the steps, from polytheism to monotheism, from image and material worship to spiritual worship, unconsciously. The truth suddenly flashed upon them, and they forgot they had ever been in darkness. Their delusion almost amounted to monomania. They attributed ideas which had in reality first been conceived in their own hearts to the teachers who had gone before. History did not support them, so they went a step further still. They re-wrote the history in accordance with their delusion, and put their monotheistic and spiritual conceptions into the mouths of men who believed that Jehovah was only one of many gods, only the national God of Israel, not clearly distinguishable from nature, to be honoured by a material worship. The proverb, he who would deceive others must first deceive himself, was remarkably exemplified in their case. The nation did not accept the true doctrine, but it was ensnared by their false delusion. All generations have accepted their view of the religion and history

of Israel ; until the critics arose to tell us that prophetic doctrine was a product of the feelings, and Israelitish history a product of the imagination.

THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES.

The most difficult question which the supporters of the traditional theory of the composition of the Pentateuch have to face, arises from what might be almost called the *systematic* neglect and violation of the laws it contains, by kings, priests, prophets, and people alike, for at least seven hundred years. We are astonished that a divine law promulgated in such an authoritative way should be so generally ignored. The fact demands an explanation. Can we find one in the history ?

According to the Pentateuch, and the book Joshua, Moses provided the children of Israel with a complete code of laws. By it, their moral, religious, and political duties were exactly defined. Moses' work as a lawgiver was complete when he ascended Mount Pisgah and died. There is, however, no reason to suppose that he had been able to secure an *ex animo* acceptance of his law by the people. Most certainly the law which he commanded then was not as yet written upon their heart. All through his lifetime the history of the people had been a chronicle of transgression. The nation which fell into the sin of calf worship at the foot of Sinai, and which neglected the necessary rite of admission into covenant with God all through the desert wanderings, must have been far from observing *all* the commandments and statutes which Moses commanded them to do. The history bears out Moses' remark, "Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you."

Besides this, it is plain that a large portion of the Mosaic Law *could* not have been observed during the desert wanderings,

or before the children of Israel were settled in peace and quiet in their own land. The forty years in the wilderness cannot have been a time of orderly worship, systematic instruction, or firm rule. We have thus abundant reasons for saying, that though Moses gave his people a law, they did not receive it at his hands.

The subsequent history confirms this. There seems to have been a short period of obedience to the law on the part of Israel, but personal influence not principle was its motive. Israel "served the Lord," we are told, "all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua." Nevertheless, Moses, with his last words, foretells a speedy apostasy. In the time of Joshua we already read of the worship of strange gods, and he himself in his last charge seems to fear the worst. In the next generation, personal influence is no longer exerted, good principles have not been implanted, and the apostasy begins. "The children of Israel forsook the Lord God of their fathers, and served Baalim and the gods of the people that were round about them."

There was nothing extraordinary in this. Israel was a child when he came out of Egypt, and the history of many wayward children is like his. Children brought up under holy influences, taught from infancy to walk in God's ways, often cast off their religion along with the restraints of childhood. A child, rebellious by nature, but kept under strict control, is of all the most likely to break loose, when the control is removed, and when he is exposed to evil influences and examples.

In the case of the children of Israel, the evil influences to which they were exposed, after their settlement in Canaan, were exceptionally subtle and powerful. They came in contact with a civilization higher than their own.⁽¹⁾ They had to learn the arts and occupations of settled life, and their teachers were the idolatrous Canaanites. The Israelites had to learn and to forget many things; they also learned a new and fascinating system of worship and they forgot their God. The dangerous influence of the Canaanites had been foreseen and provided against by Moses;

but his directions for avoiding it were disregarded, and the consequences were most disastrous.

And, on the other hand, the children of Israel were destitute of teachers of their own religion. From Joshua to Samuel no great moral teacher arose in Israel who has left behind him a name. The leaders of the nation are of the heroic type, capable of great deeds, but liable to fall into great sins. They are men of faith in God, but their faith enables them to win victories over temporal oppressors, not over spiritual foes. The nation in which Samson was a hero cannot have been far removed from savagery. Jephthah seems to have had no clear conception of the unity of God or of the worship which was acceptable to Him.⁽²⁾ Of Gideon, the greatest of the judges, it is said that he made an ephod after which all Israel went a whoring, and which became a snare. When the leaders of the nation were men like these, it is not surprising if the bulk of the nation fell away utterly from their God.

All the political circumstances of the time were against the orderly worship of God according to the Mosaic ritual. "The priest-code required a holy land under the absolute control of a holy people, all the alien nations exterminated and every impure influence banished. It required a united homogeneous people, living in a land flowing with milk and honey, under the protection of the continued presence of God in the form of a theophany enthroned above the ark."⁽³⁾ Strictly speaking, Israel had no national existence during the times of the judges. The nation's life and spirit were crushed out of them by long oppressions. The bonds which united the tribes were of the weakest character. The song of Deborah and Barak shews how incapable they were of making a united effort. The tribe of Ephraim bitterly resents national victories in which it has no share. Once, in the times of the Judges, the tribes combine together, and then they well nigh succeed, by their indiscriminating severity and by their rash vows, in blotting out the name of one tribe from Israel. When the Midianites had such power in the land, that year by year they reaped the harvest which the Israelites had sown; when the

Philistines were able to disarm them completely, and to remove all the smiths from their land; when judges like Abimelech ruled over them and stirred up civil war, and priests like Eli's sons made the worship of God repulsive; when the ark of God was taken captive, and (probably) the tabernacle at Shiloh sacked; it was utterly impossible that God's law could be observed, it was morally certain that God's law would be forgotten. The calamities which befel them made some of the laws a dead letter. There was no king, no central authority, and no nation; there were no moral teachers, and no prophets of name, and this for a period which may have been 250 years long. We cannot be surprised that the law of Moses ceased to have any important influence and any authority over the nation.

And when more peaceable and settled times came, the tradition was broken. Customs, heathen and idolatrous, or at least contrary to the law, had become inveterate. It was found impossible to enforce laws which had been so long ignored. The revival of laws which are old and may be deemed obsolete, is always a difficult task. To abolish old customs is beyond the power of absolute kings. We may wonder David did not enforce the exact observance of the law of Moses, but the history indicates that his power over his subjects was by no means absolute. When the one shrine was established at Jerusalem, obedience to the Mosaic law and the supremacy of the tribe of Judah would be closely connected in the people's minds. Moreover David was not allowed to build the temple, apart from which the ceremonial code could not be carried out.

If David's failure to enforce the law can be accounted for, the failure of his successors need cause us little trouble. His practice was an ideal to which they rarely attained. The written law would have no force against immemorial custom. Nothing less than a revolution, nothing less than the destruction of the national life for a while, could give back to the law its rightful authority.

JEREMIAH AND HIS TIMES.

The testimony of the book Jeremiah on the great questions of Old Testament criticism is of great importance, and this for two reasons. He gives us (1) most valuable information as to the moral, religious, and political condition of the people of his time;—the time, as it is alleged, of the composition of the book Deuteronomy. And (2) he is the first Old Testament author who makes considerable use of the writings of his predecessors.

It is scarcely necessary to state that Jeremiah's times were times of deep moral and religious corruption. Josiah's reformation, thorough and vigorous though it was, was not able to stay even for a moment inevitable ruin. The idolatrous worship which he destroyed quickly sprung up again. Some even were found who could trace the calamities of the Jewish kingdom to the giving up of an idolatrous rite.⁽¹⁾ It would be, perhaps, wrong to say that idolatry is the sin over which Jeremiah specially mourns. The moral corruptions of Jehovah's own worshippers are to him the keenest source of grief.⁽²⁾

It was an age of frightful corruption, but it was not an age of torpor. On the contrary, there are many signs of restlessness and activity. The times were too perilous and eventful for sleep. In the earlier years of Jeremiah's prophetic life, Egypt and Babylon were striving for the empire of the world. Between these two empires lay the little kingdom of Judah. She could not be wholly independent; which alliance should she prefer? Which would be the more powerful lord to trust to, and which would be the easier master to serve? Later on the question was, Shall we submit to the king of Babylon's yoke, or shall we join Egypt and the neighbouring nations in a league against him? Questions of policy like these, questions on which the national life depended, must have stirred the nation's heart to its depths.

In religious matters there was much activity and great difference of opinion. The word of the Lord was eagerly enquired

at the prophet's mouth. Worshippers and sacrifices were not lacking to the temple at Jerusalem. With many, it was still an open question whether their religion should be a polytheism or a monotheism. Some prophets thought that Jehovah and His people were essentially united, the life of Israel was bound up with the life of his God; but others declared that He was about to destroy the people whom He had chosen, and the temple where He had caused His name to dwell. Some thought that Jehovah required of His worshippers only material sacrifices and ritual observances; others laid stress upon interior devotion and obedience to His moral law. It is plain these matters were keenly debated by the rival teachers. Every now and then we find in Jeremiah expressions which may have been party or national cries. Such may be the thrice repeated "Temple of the Lord," and such the saying, "The law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet."⁽³⁾ Jeremiah's teaching on the controverted points was not popular. It was too spiritual in its tone, too terrible in its forebodings of destruction, too humiliating to the national pride. After ages might give Jeremiah the title of "The prophet."⁽⁴⁾ The people of his time charged him with speaking falsely in the name of the Lord, and sought his life. As might be expected, the two chief religious parties took different political sides. There does not appear to have been any essential reason why the supporters of the pure worship of Jehovah should have preferred the Babylonian alliance, but such was undoubtedly the case. Josiah died fighting at Megiddo against Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt. Jeremiah's counsel was to bear the yoke of the king of Babylon.⁽⁵⁾

In Jeremiah's time there was no force strong enough to crush opposition, and to determine for good and all the course which the nation's religious and political development should take. Josiah, no doubt, could put down all outward opposition to his will, but it may be considered certain that there were many who strongly disapproved of his reforms, who jealously scrutinized the means he used for carrying them into effect, who said within themselves, Our time will come again. A precedent was not wanting to

them; Manasseh had followed Hezekiah. And after Josiah's time the reaction came. The worshippers of Jehovah were no longer supported by the royal authority. That authority was not strong, nor was it consistently used. The Egyptian and Babylonian parties in turn got the upper hand. The power of the princes was great, and controlled that of the king.⁽⁶⁾ The prophets were divided amongst themselves. Both priest and prophet were denounced by Jeremiah. There were writers as well as oral teachers upon the controversies of the time; the pen of scribes was busy, and busy about "the law of the LORD."

Such being the characteristics of the age in which Jeremiah lived, is it likely that a book hitherto unknown, claiming to be the work of Moses, necessitating a religious revolution, would be accepted as genuine and authentic without challenge or protest? The more useful Deuteronomy was to one party in the state, the more certain the other parties were to denounce it as a forgery. It cannot have been a popular book in Jeremiah's time. It would not be accepted in a burst of popular enthusiasm. Its appropriate denunciations of punishment on the Jewish nation, its decided prohibition of the popular worship of the high places, its lofty standard of spiritual teaching,—all these must have inclined the people to say of it, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" Even supposing that Josiah was strong enough to put down all objections to its authenticity, the circumstances of its "invention" could not have been forgotten when he died. The party which had chafed under his reforms would not have hesitated to denounce it as spurious after his death, if they had had a good case. The strong prophetic party which opposed Jeremiah would naturally regard with suspicion a book so useful for Jeremiah's purposes. The family of Aaron would not approve of a book which seemed to draw no distinction between them and the rest of the tribe of Levi.⁽⁷⁾ The writers busy about the law were conversant with the ancient literature of their nation, and would have much to say against a new book of which they had never heard. The Egyptian party would do their best to damage the credit of the chief supporters of the Babylonian alliance. In short, the book

Deuteronomy would, after Josiah's death, have far more enemies than friends. If the lying pen of Jeremiah and his school had made a lie to be the law of Jehovah, there were many whose opinions made them anxious, and whose knowledge made them competent, to expose the fraud.

The narrative of the book of Kings adds force to these considerations. We see that the book Deuteronomy when found does not lie on a royal shelf or in a priestly library. The question of its authenticity was not a matter of mere literary curiosity; the book Deuteronomy is henceforth a book of the deepest interest and importance, not only to priests and prophets, but to all the people. It is not allowed to remain a dead letter a moment longer. Its contents are made known to all. It is proclaimed publicly in the ears of all the people. It is at once put into force. Its long neglect is regarded as an inexpressible sin involving the ruin of the nation. Notwithstanding the greater number of all classes of the people disliked its teaching, and would have been glad to discredit its authority, it was accepted in silence, or rather with professions of penitence. Of Jeremiah men could say, Thou hast spoken falsely in the name of the Lord. Of Deuteronomy no one said, God did not speak to Moses thus. We argue that if, in the circumstances of the case, the genuineness of Deuteronomy was undisputed, the only reason could be that its genuineness was indisputable.

We cannot, for it would involve the consideration of details, say much on the other cause which makes the witness of Jeremiah's book so important on critical questions, viz., his quotations of former writings.

The nature of his connection with other books of the Old Testament is often disputed. It cannot be said certainly whether he is quoting them or they are quoting him. Still the range of his admitted quotations is very wide. He is plainly thoroughly acquainted with the national literature. It is unreasonable to suppose he was alone in his knowledge, and so we infer that the sacred writings then extant were probably known to a considerable number of persons. It would be also unreasonable to

suppose that this knowledge of sacred literature was confined to one school or party. The men who boasted "We are wise and the law of the Lord is with us," would have it too. So here again we see how extremely difficult it would be to impose a new code of laws on the people in Josiah's time. Forged decretals are promulgated and accepted only in a dark age.

The passage contained in Jeremiah vii. 21, 22, 23, may here be referred to, as it is said it contains "what, from the nature of the case, we could hardly have expected to find, viz., a formal and explicit statement that in Jeremiah's time there was no such volume as the Pentateuch recognized as a divine utterance."⁽⁸⁾

The words are these: "Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices; But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people."

Jeremiah here seems to deny that God gave the people ordinances concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices in the times of the Exodus. Can he have meant this? Those who maintain it have forgotten their own theory as to the composition of the book of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah's relation to it. They might have found the passage very useful for their purpose had Amos or Hosea written it, but it proves too much for them in Jeremiah's mouth. Jeremiah's intimate knowledge of Deuteronomy is not disputed, his mind is imbued with its words and teachings. Deuteronomy asserts that God gave the people ordinances concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices in the times of the Exodus.⁽⁹⁾ Are we to understand that Jeremiah is here protesting against Hilkiah's "pious forgery"? Was he an accomplice in that forgery or was he not? If an accomplice, he would not have stultified himself by such a protest. If he was not an accomplice, his use of Deuteronomy shews that he *bonâ fide* believed its statements concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.

The true meaning of the passage is not far to seek. All

through the chapter Jeremiah has been exalting moral duties over external rites and ceremonies. He has had in his mind the ten words as the basis of the moral law: and he has also had in his mind the events of Mount Sinai, where the covenant was made; verse 23 leads us back to Exodus xix. 5, 6. It is possible that here he may be referring to the fact that the first basis of the covenant was the moral law, and that the ceremonial law was not introduced till after the apostasy of the golden calf. The words, "The day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt," may refer to God's earlier dealings with Israel, to the period immediately succeeding the Exodus. But, more probably, the moral law is here exalted above the ceremonial law. Such expressions as "Thou desiredst not sacrifice," "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not," are to be compared. The force of such statements is expressed exactly by the words in Hosea vi. 6, "For I desired mercy and *not* sacrifice; and the knowledge of God *more* than burnt offerings."

The statement contained in this passage is thus seen to have no bearing on the date of the composition of the law. The critical explanation makes Jeremiah inconsistent with his authorities and with himself.

LECTURE IV.

“The Spirit of the LORD spake by me ; and His word was in my tongue.”—2 *Sam.* xxiii. 2.

The Modern Biblical critics are not, it must be freely confessed, wanting in appreciation of the Hebrew prophet. They confess that he was endowed with many marvellous gifts of God. They give him tasks beyond the powers of ordinary men. They allow him to range, almost at will, over the field of the past and present. But there they draw their line. Hitherto he may come, but no further. They deny him that power which men have been wont to regard as peculiarly his own. They do not admit that God ever lifted to him that dark cloud which hides the future from our eyes. He discerned the lessons of the past, but he could not declare the course of future events. He had deep insight into the present, but he had no foresight of the distant future. Prophecy in the sense of prediction is not allowed by them to have any real existence.⁽¹⁾

The critical argument here may be stated thus. A knowledge of the distant future is supernatural. The prophet's predictions must be classed with the prophet's miracles. Miraculous narratives may be variously explained, but so far as they are miraculous, they are

not historical. They are sometimes pure inventions, sometimes exaggerations of the truth, sometimes capable of a natural explanation. With respect to the predictions contained in the Hebrew prophets, they are commonly written after the event. Sometimes the books themselves are centuries later than their supposed authors. Sometimes passages were interpolated in ancient books. In some cases the prophecies bring about their own fulfilment, in others they resolve themselves into analogies or historical parallels, in others the fulfilment is read into the prophet's word by the Jewish or Christian interpreter.

We see, then, that we have here two lines of argument :

(1) Prophecy, in the sense of the prediction of future events, is *a priori* inconceivable.

(2) Satisfactory evidence of the fulfilment of so-called prophecies is not forthcoming.

The first argument has an important place in the argument of every book of the modern critical school. Without it no evidence of weight for the late date of some of the books of the Old Testament could be produced. If you find a plain prediction of an event of later history in a book, it is at once said either that the passage is a late interpolation, or that the whole book is late. So the *a priori* assumption of the inconceivableness of the prediction of future events by man, is used to destroy the evidence for the fulfilment of prophecy ; the second argument of the critics does not stand without the first. When the Apologist points to this passage, or that book, as containing plain proofs

of the fulfilment of prophecy, he is answered, these predictions were made after the event. When he asks the ground on which this assertion is made, he is given some arguments derived from words or grammatical forms. These are said to be late, or not used by the reputed author. When he asks for further and more conclusive evidence, he finds that the main argument, the argument from the predictions, has been kept in reserve. Other arguments may be weak or utterly fail, but this, it is confidently affirmed, is of conclusive strength. It is of importance to draw attention to this fact, because the modern critics profess that they are willing to fight the question on either line of argument. Predictions of the future are *a priori* inconceivable, that is one line. No predictions of the future can be produced, that is the other line. When you examine the arguments, you find these lines are not independent of one another. The critics cannot maintain the second unless they assume the first.⁽²⁾

It is worth while also to draw attention to the unfair way in which the predictor of the future or the worker of miracles is described by some of the modern critics. They describe him as one who is supposed to have supernatural powers at his command.⁽³⁾ And then the sufferings and persecutions of the prophets are pointed to as an easy proof of the absurdity of the idea. We ask, Who is there that maintains that any mere man has ever had supernatural powers at his command? Who regards a prophet or a worker of miracles as superhuman? Many believe that superhuman power was entrusted to him at certain times and for certain

purposes, but no one believes that he was able to work a miracle at will. Many believe that the prophet was allowed to catch sight of a line here and there in the Book of the Future, but no one imagines that he was able to read it as an open book. One may fairly protest against this travesty, this caricature of the Christian conception of the prophet or worker of miracles. We know no superhuman man but Him who was Son of Man and Son of God. We know no superhuman actions but those worked by the might of God Himself.

It may be well to notice briefly here the linguistic arguments used by the critics, as they have important bearing on this part of my subject. Linguistic arguments, to be valid, must be drawn from a sufficiently wide field. You cannot determine an author's characteristic words, phrases, and forms, from a few chapters. Now all the materials of the Old Testament critic must be derived from the Old Testament itself.⁽⁴⁾ He has no external aids whatsoever. He has to determine the course of the development of the Hebrew language through more than one thousand years. He has to do this under peculiar difficulties. The Hebrew and Aramaic dialects come from a common fount, they touch one another in the history of the Northern Kingdom, they blend at the time of the Exile. The earliest Hebrew, the dialect of the Northern Kingdom, the corrupted Hebrew of the returned exiles have some common characteristics.⁽⁵⁾ It is difficult to establish any theory when your materials are both meagre and ambiguous. It is, on the other hand, most easy to

devise one according to your fancy and taste. Your imagination supplies all deficiencies. It may, in this case, run riot amongst centuries. You may call early Hebrew late, and late early. If you are at liberty to suppose an interpolation whenever you see a difficulty, you can frame what theory you please. The Old Testament as we have it, the critic says, is the product of the subjectivity of the prophets. It is more true to say that the Old Testament, as the critics leave it when they have re-arranged it, is a product of their own subjectivity. The field of Old Testament criticism is a field of wide limits, and with few landmarks. Nowhere are there stored up for us any precious, early, and decisive fragments of tradition like those in which the pages of Eusebius abound; there are none of those contemporary helps which guide and restrain the New Testament critic. The Old Testament critic wants more help than his New Testament brother. The wildest dreamer can hardly imagine more than a hundred years between the earliest and latest book of the New Testament. The writing of the Old Testament was spread over more than a thousand years.⁽⁶⁾

Sufficient proof of this subjectivity, this arbitrariness of the Old Testament critics, may be found by comparing the conclusions at which they have arrived during the past fifty years. They all agree in this—to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy. They divide the Old Testament into a mass of fragments. The work of destruction is complete; hardly one stone is left upon another. But now the difficulty of their task begins. The critical faculty has enabled them to

pull the Old Testament to pieces ; that same faculty may be verified and established, if they can put it together again. The Jewish and Christian Church have been utterly mistaken, we are told, in their conception of the Old Testament ; but what is the true conception ? At present the critics cannot tell us which is the topmost and which is the foundation stone. It would be unreasonable to expect them to agree in details, but at least they ought to be able to agree in general results. They ought to be able to tell us whether Deuteronomy is the first or last book of the Pentateuch. There should be some certainty whether a prophetic work is before or after the exile. They might be agreed whether the Psalter as a whole is Davidic or Maccabean. Successive generations should not assert with equal positiveness of the very same words and sentences, that they are unmistakeable proofs of an early and of a late date. The critics should be able to tell us by this time whether Elohim or Jehovah is the name used to represent the Deity in the earliest documents. There was a time when Ewald's dicta formed the staple of the articles of Biblical dictionaries. A time has come when the hypotheses of Kuenen and Wellhausen are reproduced in encyclopædias. It is well to remember that Kuenen's and Wellhausen's theories are not a development of Ewald's, but its subversion. They do not build on Ewald's lines, nor even on Ewald's foundation. The theories of the two schools of criticism are as contrary the one to the other, as the traditional theory is to both. So it would seem that the subjectivity of the

critic, not the facts with which he deals, determines his conception of the Old Testament. We may retort their accusation against the prophets upon themselves, "They have no scruples in allowing their own convictions and wishes to exercise an influence on their representation. They colour, they arrange, they select their facts."⁽⁷⁾

When then the linguistic arguments concerning the Old Testament are meagre, ambiguous, variously interpreted, we have greater reason to lay stress on the witness which the Jewish Church bears to her Divine book. The tradition of the Jewish Church was not embodied in writing for centuries ; it was not the Eastern way. But oral traditions in the East have a peculiar strength and permanency. The lives of The Church and of The Book are bound together, and they mutually explain one another. The Book gives us a truth-like account of the origin and history of The Church. The vigorous life of The Church is a witness to the substantial truth of The Book.

I have pointed out some of the weaknesses in the critical arguments against prophecy, now let us see how they may be more directly met. This is a difficult task. For the most part we have to deal, not with certainties, but with probabilities. The evidence is often doubtful, or at least doubt has been cast upon it. It is impossible, here at any rate, to enter into details, yet details largely make up our case. A number of different arguments may be adduced, but none perhaps in themselves are conclusive. Viewed separately they might be disregarded ; viewed together

they make up a mass of evidence which must not be despised. Certainly a scientific demonstration of the existence of the Prophetic gift is not to be looked for. We cannot arrive at a certainty concerning a spiritual truth by a simple exercise of human faculties. Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. In spiritual matters, human reason has her most important, her most necessary work; but she cannot sit as supreme judge in spiritual things. Reason is the handmaid of faith, but she is not her mistress to send her whither she will.

In considering the prophetic claim to predictive power, my first remark is this: *Whether the prophets had or had not the power of foreseeing future events, it is certain they claimed it.* That will be admitted by all. Isaiah, indeed, regards the predictive power as a peculiar function of the prophets of the true God. He represents Jehovah as challenging the false gods to the contest. They were to produce their cause, they were to bring forth their strong reasons. They were to prove their deity by their knowledge of the future, they were to shew things to come. Beside Jehovah there was no God that shewed or declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that were not yet done. Amos, in words which almost demand limitation, says, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." Moses, in the book Deuteronomy, finds the criterion of a true prophet in the fulfilment of his prophecy. When the prophet's word came to pass, then the people would know that he was a prophet indeed.⁽⁸⁾

My next remark is, *The people of Israel admitted the prophetic claim.* It is quite certain the chosen people in all ages expected predictions from their prophets. They looked for predictions from the prophets, just as we look for counsel from the wise. Words concerning the future destiny of Israel lived in the nation's memories and hopes, though the prophets who had uttered them had been forgotten, or had at least long passed away. The Jews of our Lord's time, many generations after the line of prophets had ceased, were looking for the fulfilment of words spoken hundreds of years before. The Jewish people did not always believe the prophets when they prophesied. They said sometimes, "Thou hast spoken falsely," "Why hast thou prophesied thus?" and the like. But we never find them denying the predictive power. They never say, Who can foretell the future, but God alone? On the contrary, they naturally inquire of the prophet before they take any important matter in hand. In the great crises of the nation's history, kings and people come to the prophet and ask, What is the word of the Lord? And when they ask the question they mean not only, Tell us, for you are wise, what we ought to do; but they mean also, Tell us, for God tells you, what will be the issue of events, what is coming to pass.⁽⁹⁾

We remark further, *Prophetic predictions produced great practical results.* What was the cause of the vitality of the people of Israel? How was it that affliction never crushed the life out of them? How was it that they were never absorbed into either of the great world empires between which they dwelt?

Partly no doubt it was their glorious past. They had a history written with an iron pen, and fixed with lead, upon the rock for ever. This was much, but it was not sufficient. When a nation lives upon its past, it feeds upon ashes. If a nation is to preserve its life, it must have hopes in the future, as well as memories in the past. The Hebrew nation always had these hopes. When all the world was hopeless, they were hopeful. From whence did the hope spring? Most certainly it was not from measuring themselves against their great opponents. What reasonable expectation, humanly speaking, could Israel ever have of escaping destruction, when Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, or Rome laid their hand upon her? Their basis of hope can only have been this. They firmly believed that God would fulfil His promises by the prophets to them, as He had fulfilled them to their forefathers. The past history of the nation was a record of fulfilled prophecy, the future history would be a record of the accomplishment of prophecies as yet unfulfilled.

It is worth while noticing, whilst we are on this point, how utterly the modern critical theory fails to account for the hopefulness of Israel. You must base that hopefulness either on Israel's past or future, and, on that theory, neither the one nor the other gives a firm foundation. Israel's past is a prophetic picture; Israel's future is a prophetic dream. It is absurd to suppose that mythical stories can ever have penetrated so deeply into the nation's heart as to have become a source of life and strength. When the prophets recounted those wonderful acts of the Lord in the olden

time which had no existence except in the prophetic imagination, their words must have sounded in the people's ears with somewhat of a hollow ring. God acted thus in the days of old, said the prophets, and He will act in like manner in the days to come. Both statements were equally delusive. Such expedients might sustain hope and life for a time, but sooner or later they must have been seen to be a mockery and a snare.

We may illustrate all this by referring to the book of the prophet Daniel. That book purports to be in part history and in part prophecy. According to the critical theory, its history is a fable and its expectations were never realised. Although pure fiction it was readily accepted by the Jewish nation. What is more it did the work for which it was written. "Can we doubt," says Kuenen, "the powerful effect of the Book of Daniel upon the Jewish nation of those days? Can we withhold from the writer the testimony that he deserved well of his fatherland?"⁽¹⁰⁾ How can pure fiction have had such a powerful influence? Plainly, it must have acted like a dram, filling the nation with false strength for a time. But we know quite well the ultimate effect of such intoxicating draughts; it is to leave the drinker weaker and more depressed than ever. Such was not the effect here. Who can doubt that the Jewish nation emerged from its struggle with Antiochus Epiphanes, more hopeful of its future, more devoted to its God, realising more fully the treasure of its sacred books? Strange to say, the book of Daniel, though its past was mythical and its expecta-

tions had been already falsified, was admitted into the Canon without hesitation or remark. One hundred years passed away, and Messianic hopes, which are not prominent in Apocryphal literature, which did not animate the people during the Maccabean struggle, filled every Jewish breast. The whole nation enthusiastically believed in the Messianic promise, and thought that the time of the fulfilment had come. So bright was Jewish hope that it shone beyond the limits of the nation, and all through the East there was an expectation of the coming of some great One. What was the foundation of this hope? We can find none but the predictions of the Hebrew prophets. Why was the hope so strong just at that time? It was because they believed that Daniel's seventy weeks were well nigh fulfilled, and that the day of Messiah the Prince had come. And then mark this, for it definitely connects the Messianic hope of the time of Christ with the predictions of the prophets, the day of Messiah, as the Jews had determined it, passed by, as they believed, and Messiah did not come. Once again Messianic hope ceased to be a prominent element in Jewish life. Why was this? It was because their clearly defined expectations had been, as they thought, falsified. The Messianic prophecies had become an enigma of which they had lost the key, for they had failed to discern the Christ. All this shows clearly that the predictions of the Hebrew prophets had a practical, powerful, and permanent influence on Jewish national life. We are entitled to ask, Is it not truth only which has and which imparts permanent power?⁽¹¹⁾

We see then that the prophets claimed the power of predicting the future, we see that the people admitted their claim, we see that predictions, whether true or false, had a practical and permanent influence on the development of the Jewish nation. Our next point is, *In some cases, predictions of coming events and their accomplishment can be put side by side and their agreement discerned.*⁽¹²⁾

We cannot, of course, do this with most of the prophecies of the Old Testament. In many cases we cannot prove beyond all reasonable doubt the date of the prophecies; the evidence is deficient. In other cases the resemblance between the prediction and the fulfilment is not discernible by all; we may feel it for ourselves, but we cannot bring it home to others. But there are cases left which may fairly be ranked amongst evidential prophecies. These may not compel conviction, but they demand attention. They are forcible, if not conclusive. Such a prophecy is Jeremiah's double prediction of a seventy years' duration to the Jewish captivity and the Babylonish Empire. Both events were certainly far beyond the foresight of the most sagacious of Jeremiah's time. Both events were improbable in the highest degree. It is difficult to say which was the more unlikely of the two—that the Jewish nation exiled to Babylon should in seventy years return, or that the great Babylonish Empire, owning no rival amongst the world kingdoms, should in seventy years be destroyed. Jeremiah made these two improbable predictions, and both were fulfilled. His prophecy was too complex for men to ascribe its

fulfilment to a happy accident. The genuineness of his book as a whole is not disputed. The critics are placed in a difficulty here, from which they find it difficult to extricate themselves. Some admit the literal fulfilment, and take refuge in the unscientific, uncritical hypothesis of an interpolation of which there is no proof. Others admit the genuineness of the passage, but deny the literal fulfilment; the captivity, they argue, lasted not seventy, but only sixty years.⁽¹³⁾

The Book of Daniel might furnish us with other instances of fulfilled predictions. The last word in the controversy as to its date has not yet been said. Unless you start with the assumption that the prediction of the future is an impossibility, the evidence for its Maccabean date is meagre and inconclusive. And even if we grant the Maccabean date, we do not give up our case, there would be still predictions of the future in the Book of Daniel.⁽¹⁴⁾

My next remark is, *The Hebrew prophets were able to foresee the coming age and its nature, centuries before it came.* It is not on the fulfilment of predictions of events in the histories of the kingdoms of the world, that I should be inclined to rest the Hebrew prophet's case. It is the Kingdom of Heaven, its character and its extent, which the Hebrew prophets rejoiced to see afar off. They were able to overpass the limits of their race and age, they were able to look forward in triumphant hope to a time when the world-wide kingdoms of righteousness and peace should be established. They foresee not merely the future of the Jew, but the future of the race. The whole

earth would be "full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." They were able to foresee a time when there should be a universal religion—one God to all the families of the earth. The idea seemed folly to Roman statesmen, hundreds of years after ; but it has been fulfilled, if not completely, in a marvellous degree. It is the Messianic predictions of the prophets which have had the most wonderful fulfilment. We may put aside the consideration of the fulfilment of details of Messianic prophecies in the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth. On these opinions will differ. But the prophets draw for us a wonderful picture, Christ the Son of David, who should come. The historians tell us of a wonderful historical personage, Jesus the Son of Mary, who did come. When we place the prophetic anticipation and the historical record side by side, we can hardly fail to see a general agreement between the two. To have given mankind, even in the barest outline, the picture of Jesus Christ, is, I think, the surest proof of the prophet's predictive power.

It must be borne in mind that these prophecies, or at least many of them, are contrary in their spirit to those we might expect from Jews. The Jews are by nature and education exclusive, they expect to keep their good things for themselves. The prophets in their predictions go contrary to Jewish prejudices. They anticipate the passing away of the Jews' most precious things. God's kingdom was going to be wider than a Jew desired, God's kingdom would be nobler than a Jew could imagine. You cannot say these predictions

were the expression of Jews' enthusiastic hopes. They were outside, above, even contrary to their expectations.

My next remark is one of a wholly different kind. *Prediction of the future, as it is generally understood, is not the essential work of the Hebrew prophet.* In the popular idea, the Hebrew prophet is the predictor of future events. Foretelling the future, is not merely one of his functions, it is his essential function. He did other things, no doubt, but this was the one thing which made him what he was. From this he derived his name of prophet. This was the secret, or, more correctly, the manifestation of his strength. This it is which distinguishes him from other messengers of God.

Such no doubt is the popular idea. When we come to compare it with the facts, we find that it is an exaggeration, and a mistake. It gives an undue importance to that which was, after all, only a subordinate feature of the prophetic work. It mistakes the essential function of a prophet. A man might be a prophet, and yet never, in the ordinary sense of the words, foretell the future.⁽¹⁵⁾

It is hardly necessary to say that etymology, whether Hebrew or Greek, gives no certain support to the popular idea. The etymology of the common Hebrew word for a prophet is doubtful.⁽¹⁶⁾ But no proposal makes prediction to be the fundamental meaning of "*Nabi*." We may say with certainty that though the "*Nabi*" may foretell the future, this is not indicated by the name he bears. The etymology of the

Greek word is obvious, but leads us to no certain conclusion. The *προ* in *προφήτης* has no necessary reference to time. The *προφήτης* might be a *foreteller* or a *forthteller*, or a speaker *for* another. On this point Greek etymology is of course a secondary authority. When we are discussing a peculiarly Hebrew institution, we are not bound by Greek ideas of it.

Again, usage is against the popular idea. The earliest prophet is Abraham, and he foretells no future events. The greatest prophet is Moses, and when you have eliminated all his predictions from his teaching, that teaching remains a perfect whole. Elijah is the typical prophet, and his work had almost exclusive reference to the men and the circumstances of his own time. The Hebrew historians are reckoned amongst the prophets; the chroniclers of the past had thus the prophetic essential no less than the predictors of the future. Passing on to New Testament times, we find it stated on Divine authority that no greater prophet than John the Baptist had as yet appeared. Yet it was John the Baptist's work not to promise a Coming One, but to point to Him Who had come. Going on still later, we find that, in the Christian Church, the function of the prophet was to interpret Scripture. He was the forthteller not the foreteller, the preacher not the predictor.⁽¹⁷⁾ Last of all, though men are wont to regard "prophesying" and "foretelling" as synonymous English words, the identification is not even now universally made, and it was less common two or three centuries ago than now.

And, indeed, we cannot read our Old Testament, that monument of prophetic power, that chronicle of prophetic work, without perceiving how contrary the popular theory of the prophet is to the facts recorded there. Those who make the Hebrew prophet a mere foreteller, lower his dignity and ignore his great work. Which was the nobler or more important function, to tell the people their duty to their God and their fellow-men, to teach them truths long forgotten or hitherto unknown, to be the champion of truth and righteousness in a crooked and perverse generation; or to tell with more or less of distinctness what would happen in the latter days? We may say boldly that the Hebrew prophet's work was in the present. He did not write books for after generations to read, though, strange to say, they read them. He shot his arrows straight into the hearts of his hearers—the men of his own generation. In times of unexampled and unparalleled afflictions, difficulties, and dangers, when the lights and lessons of the past were insufficient, he seems to have been allowed glimpses of the future, so that even in the darkest times it might still be possible for his people to hope. But what prophetic writing could fairly be called a book of predictions? The prophet's hopes are in the coming age, but his work is in the present. He is not a dreamer, he is a practical man. He speaks and acts as one who knows that the present is the seedtime, the future the harvest. If he foretells the harvest, it is that he may induce men to sow the seed.

It is not very difficult, I think, to see why the

foretelling part of the prophet's functions has had such undue importance attached to it. For the same reason the holy men of old are marked off from those of our own time, as if they were beings of another kind. For the same reason, the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, not now given, are exalted in comparison with His ordinary gifts, distributed to all Christians of all time. The faith which removes mountains is thought more highly of than the faith which removes the burden of sin. The external, supernatural gifts shine more brightly before men's eyes than the internal, supernatural graces. There is a glitter about the foretelling absent from the forthtelling. And yet the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit are not, as St. Paul tells us, the best gifts. The spirit of love is more to be coveted than the spirit of prophecy. To know with a deep full knowledge God's revelation already given, is greater than to be the recipient of a fresh revelation. To tell a man how he ought to live, is greater than to tell a man what is coming to pass in the latter days.

And yet, there is a sense in which it may be said that the prophet's great work was to predict. The prophet himself was a prediction of a greater prophet. The prophet's whole work was an earnest of the greater work yet to be accomplished. In the first lecture we saw that the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ demanded preparation for it, and now we may say that the prophets and their work demanded a fulfilment. Those have not determined the prophets' true place who disconnect them from the Great Prophet of

the New Covenant. The prophets arose in their season, they fulfilled their work, they fell on sleep, they left their people hoping for something more. If we believe that God is Ruler and Governor in the World, we may take what theory of the prophetic work we will, and yet still feel compelled to admit that the prophets implied the Christ. The prophets tell us, God never wholly left this world; the prophets assure us, God's abiding place shall be once more amongst men. In this sense the prophets, whether their immediate work was in the past, or the present, or the future, are always predicting. Their greatest work, nay, we may say, their *one* great work was to point to the Great Coming One.⁽¹⁸⁾ This was the reason why John the Baptist was the greatest of them all. He could point to the Christ with a definiteness and a distinctiveness beyond their power. From some of the prophets we learn nothing of the Coming One directly. They predicted none of the facts of His life or death. They tell us nothing of His nature or work. But their work was always a work of preparation, and of preparation for Him. The works of the different prophets differed in outward form. Sometimes beautiful were their feet upon the mountains, catching, from their high standpoint, the first glimpse of the Deliverer, telling the glad tidings, publishing peace. But not less truly were they filling the office of prophet, when they were working in the valleys, and were so preparing the way for the Coming One, when they made the crooked things straight, and the rough places plain, before His face.

If we view the prophet's work in this way, we shall at once see an answer to those who assert that the prophecies whose fulfilment is quoted in the New Testament, are passages divorced from their context, and interpreted on wrong principles. How can they be divorced from their context if the burden of every prophetic message is the Coming One? How can they be interpreted on wrong principles, when "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophecy?"

The prophets, as we have seen, are not to be regarded as essentially predictors of future events. What then was their great work? It may be stated thus, *They had to communicate new truths to their people.*

The truths which the Prophets had to preach to their people were new in form, and in part, perhaps, new in substance. This was the source of their influence and strength. We in this age, we in this place, are most ready to admit the truth of that saying which legend ascribes to a Hebrew, Truth is the strongest, Truth overcometh all things; Truth doth abide and is strong for ever, and liveth and reigneth for ever.⁽¹⁹⁾ Still, like all forces, Truth is not independent of circumstances. She requires a field for her exercise. She is a most potent lever, but without a fulcrum she cannot work. Certain conditions fulfilled, she is able to put forth her might. One of these conditions is, she must not have waxen old and obsolete. Objectively, the Truth is never old, for she dwells with the Eternal God. Subjectively, the Truth may become old, for she sojourns amongst mortal men.

She cannot be destroyed, but she may be smothered. She can never die, but she may cease to be a living force. In the beginning a truth flashes out brightly and warmly from the heart of a single man. It is embraced by the nobler few. It is wondered at, struggled against, cavilled at, explained away by the many. It makes its way by its own inherent force, until finally it is accepted by all. The light once concentrated is now diffused. What was one man's pearl of great price is now every man's common thing. What at first seemed to be a paradox has now become a platitude.⁽²⁰⁾ Then, too often, it passes away like a seed plant from the face of the earth. It cannot be quickened except it die. It was the prophet's function to enunciate new truths, to apply them before they had lost the vigour of their youth. He had something to say to the people, something worth hearing, something the people did not know or had long forgotten. Herein his marvellous power lay.

But there is another condition to be fulfilled if the truth is to make its way. Preparation must be made for its reception. The good seed must fall on good soil. There must be something in the heart of man which responds to the truth when offered him. It acts with him, and not as an alien force. The new teaching must be expressed in old and familiar language. And so the truth must be new, and yet not wholly new. Hence it follows that the teachers of new truths must in the first place appeal to the nation from which they themselves have sprung. Some at least of their own people occupy the place from

which they started. Others have gone half way along with them. With all these they have much in common. They may be able to show that the new is only a legitimate development of the old. In the case of the Hebrew prophets, speaking as they did in the first place to the Hebrew nation, this condition of success was fulfilled.

We may here profitably compare and contrast the power of the ancient Hebrew prophet and the power of the modern prophet—the preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The power of the preacher is often great. It is greatest when he realizes some aspect of the truth more fully than those around him, when he can preach it with freshness of language and originality of thought; in other words, when he is the preacher of truths in some sense new. But, after all, the preacher and his hearers are on the same footing. He can tell them nothing new in substance. The truths he preaches may be new in form, and new in their setting; they may be presented in a new light, they may be recommended by new analogies or enforced by new arguments, but in themselves they are old. In former times the power of the preacher has been greater than in our own day. The reason seems always to have been that he had an opportunity of impressing ancient truths, truths forgotten for generations, upon the minds of men. Herein lay the power of some of the preachers of the middle ages. Thus it came to pass that Colet, leaving the schoolmen and lecturing on the Epistles of St. Paul, spoke as one inspired. Thus it was that Whitfield and Wesley

stirred the hearts of men. Aye, and surely most of us have had in our own lives a similar experience. A great truth has at one time or another been made clear to us—a truth not new in itself, but new, at least in its practical bearings, to ourselves. With what force it came! The salt of that truth had not lost its savour for us. We had not sinned against it and deprived it of its power over us. It was a crisis in our lives. How was it determined? Did familiarity with that truth breed contempt for it? or did it become an active principle within our hearts? If the latter, it will abide in its first vigour. It will go on from strength to strength.

The likeness between ancient prophets and preachers of modern times is great, but there is one remarkable and significant point of contrast. The word of the one abides, the word of the other passes away. The words of the great prophets are always fresh, they are always read. But the sermons of great preachers soon become mere waste paper. Men of the next generation read them, and wonder what was the cause of their marvellous power. Power they had in their time. They worked a work which shall never pass away. They sowed seed from which an eternal harvest shall spring. Thousands and tens of thousands will rise up and call them blessed in the eternal kingdom of our Lord and God. There was a divine power in their words, but their words were not themselves divine. Culture they had, and the Hebrew prophets could not have it. Philosophy and science had taught them truths of which the Hebrew prophet never

dreamed. A new revelation had thrown a flood of light on truths which the Hebrew prophets saw as in a glass darkly. They spake to men of their own country in words suiting their taste, and falling in with their wonted lines of thought. Spite of these advantages—the advantages of a new revelation, increased culture, disciples prepared for their teaching, their words have passed away. When we seek for comfort or instruction we pass them by. Their books lie forgotten upon our library shelves. They are dry bones that can never live again. We leave them for the dust and for the worm, and we go to a book which was old when they were young. It is the only book which abides, not only in its spirit, but in its matter; not only in its thoughts, but in its words.

And now, as I think, we are ready to answer the important question, What is the Hebrew prophet? What is his essential function? The question may be answered thus: *The prophet is God's interpreter, by him God reveals Himself to man.*⁽²¹⁾

When we examine the Old Testament scriptures we find that the prophet is regarded as one who acts as another's spokesman or mouth-piece. The prophet speaks, but not his own words. Thus Aaron is called the prophet of Moses. It was said to Moses concerning him (Ex. iv. 16), "He shall be thy spokesman to the people; and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." And again it was said, "See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron, thy brother, shall be thy prophet." (Ex. vii. 1.)

And this idea of the prophet's essential functions is confirmed when we consider what is the prophet's characteristic phrase. No doubt he often says, "It shall come to pass," but this would not fit most of his utterances. But whenever he speaks, he begins in the same strain; he calls the attention of his people to the fact that he is speaking in the name of another, that he is speaking the words of another. "Thus saith the Lord"—is his invariable preface. Thus he enforces all his prophecies. "I do send thee unto them," saith God to Ezekiel, "and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, for they are a rebellious house, yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them." (Ez. ii. 4, 5.) There can be no doubt, indeed no doubt is expressed by any, that the prophets regarded themselves as the spokesmen of God. Kuenen says, "The canonical prophets, all without distinction, are possessed by the consciousness that they proclaim the word of Jahvah, and express that conviction, on frequent occasions, and in the most unambiguous manner."⁽²²⁾

Starting with this fundamental idea, the relation of a prophet to The Prophet follows immediately. There is One only who reveals God to man. There is One only who manifests His will. "No man hath seen God at any time; the Only begotten Son Which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." It is He Who in the beginning was the Word of God, and Who in the fulness of time became flesh and tabernacled amongst us. From Him all light to this dark world comes. In Him God and man are per-

sonally united. There was a union of the divine and the human in the prophet, but not the inseparable union of God and Man. From them many words of God proceeded forth, but He was The Word of God Himself. The prophets foreshadowed Him, even as the sacrifices of bulls and goat typified the sacrifice of the Lamb without blemish and without spot. We give heed unto their word as unto a light shining in a dark place; but when He came, the day dawned, the day star arose in our hearts.

Again, taking the prophet's relationship to God as the fundamental idea, we may best explain his relation to time past, present, and future. I think few can have failed to notice what we may call a chronological difficulty in prophetic utterances. Things present and things future are mixed together. The immediate future and the distant future are spoken of in the same breath. We may see a reason for this when we consider that the prophet, a creature of time, is speaking the words of the Eternal God. To God, past, present, and future are alike. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Pet. iii. 8). Is it not natural to suppose that, when the prophet was admitted to view the Divine mysteries, he regarded them, in some measure, even as they are regarded by God?

And further, if the prophet has this peculiar relation with the Eternal God, we may expect that his work will have relation to all time. Man attaches undue importance to the present moment. The past has gone, the future is uncertain and has not yet come. The only

time he possesses is the present, this he values because it is his own. We may expect that those in an especial manner taught of God will correct this false estimate. The past and the future will be put in their proper place. So, indeed, we find it in the prophetic writings. The prophet reads the past as an open book and with an enlightened eye. It tells him what is to be done in the present time. It tells him what is to be expected in the future. The future, too, he is enabled to see. He looks deep into the present order of things. He is able to separate the essential from the accidental, the spirit from the circumstance. He can see the rottenness of the core, when the outside tokens tell of vigour and of life. He knows the dawn is coming, for he catches a glimpse of the morning star. And sometimes, as we have seen reasons to believe, he can do more than this. He can predict a harvest of which the seed is not yet sown. To his gift of insight the gift of foresight is added. By this means new elements are brought into his teaching. Thus men are led to look forward into a future not yet revealed, which the eye of man has not seen, and the ear of man has not heard.

Arguing on these principles, the predictions contained in the prophetic writings cease to surprise us. Most certainly they are not things to be apologized for. They flow most naturally from the peculiar relation of the prophets to their God. Whenever the Divine Spirit takes hold of a man, it invariably changes his relations with time. "Things to come" are henceforth part of his possession. He walks "by faith, not

by sight," and "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The "Now" becomes of secondary importance. The "For Ever" fills his heart and soul. Of course this moral change with respect to time wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, is not the same as the change wrought in the prophets, but it is analogous to it. Both seem to prepare men for that coming age when they shall be creatures of time no longer, when they shall live through eternity with the Eternal God.

My last words must now be said, and I would make them an answer to this question, *Why do we believe the prophets when they claim to speak God's words?*

We have seen many reasons in the course of our investigation. The prophet's claim, whether true or false, is made and is admitted. The predictive power, whether real or unreal, exercises a powerful influence on the development of the nation. The correspondences between predictions and fulfilments, at the very least, demand attention and require explanation. More important still, the Jewish Church, the fruitful Mother of many saints, the foster-Mother of the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Martyrs and early teachers of the Christian Church, bears her witness. With the food of prophetic teaching she nourished these saints of God.

We can say more than this. From the Christian point of view the prophet's claim may be readily admitted. If we believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the great teacher come from God, then we have

a standard by which prophetic teaching may be tested—a Divine measure for the words which claim to be Divine. When we see that the prophets prepare his way, that they shadow forth His teaching, that they point to Him with one consent; when we see that He approves, explains, develops, and never contradicts their teaching; then His authority confirms theirs. Their lamp was kindled at His light. They speak according to His word, and it is because they have His light in them.

From the point of view of natural religion something may be urged in favour of the prophetic claim. The prophets seem to throw light upon the material Creation, its condition and its design, its laws and its anomalies, its mysterious retributions and its final end. They give us probable solutions of some of its intricate problems. On such points no one can speak with authority but the Designer Himself. The light which lightens Creation must come from the Creator.

Passing from these external witnesses, what witness do the prophetic words bear concerning themselves? What is their internal character? Are we not able to see that a Divine Spirit animates them throughout? It is, of course, difficult to discern between the teaching which comes directly from God, and the teaching which comes indirectly from Him. Who would wish to distinguish too sharply between the Divine light in man, and the Divine truths revealed to man? We cannot always tell which are the direct, and which the reflected rays of the Sun. We cannot say exactly

where heaven and earth meet. We cannot say certainly whether a noble thought comes from the aspiration of a man upwards to his God, or from the condescension of God to His creatures on earth.

But when books are full of truths, for which you can find no human teacher, and which seem to pass the limits of human thought; when our daily experience seems to verify them, and when we find them to be truths by which we may lead a noble life;—then we are ready to exclaim, these truths came direct from God.

When again we see the prophetic word abiding, while the world changes; when we see the universal laws of corruption, of change, and of death, set at nought by a higher principle of life;—then we remember that it is God only Which hath immortality, it is the word of God only which abideth for ever.

When we see again that in the prophets there is no mixture of truth and error; that we need not be eclectic when we read them, that we have not to separate the wheat from the chaff;—then we are ready to believe that the hand of the Lord was upon His prophets, guiding their feet so that they turned not to the right hand nor to the left;—then we remember that it is the words of the Lord which are “pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times in the fire.”

And when again we see that the teachers of the most exclusive nation of the world have given us the most Catholic teaching; when we see that those words spoken of the stars of the firmament of heaven, are

true of the Hebrew prophets, "Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world ;"—then we draw the inference that the teachers of the Race must have learnt their lessons from the One Father of the Race. The teacher of Mankind is God Himself.

It is by thoughts such as these that the question may be answered, How do we know the prophets speak God's words? I do not say that they amount to a complete answer, but they may give us a practical proof. At the least we are bound not to neglect teaching recommended by such arguments.⁽²³⁾

We cannot follow Moses into the mountain and stand by his side whilst God talks with him face to face, and gives him His message to men. But when he comes down from the mountain we can see his face shine, unless a veil is upon our hearts.

We can never see all the rounds of the ladder which joins earth and heaven. When the prophets in visions see that ladder and the Lord standing above it, they cannot prove to us what they saw. But if we find the basis of their ladder is not earth, but heaven ; if when we consider any truth in its surroundings it seems to be a revelation from above, not an aspiration from below ; if it seems all unconnected with the thoughts of the prophet's people and of his time ;—then we have good reason to believe that he did see a vision from the Lord, and receive a word from His mouth.

And so when the prophet tells us, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my

tongue ;” when an Apostle assures us that “Prophecy came not of old time by the will of men, but holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ;” —we answer and say, Amen, So it is. The Divine faculty within us leaps forth to grasp the Divine Word without us. Living in the light of the Gospel Day, we are assured that even in those dark days, when men were seeking the Lord if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, He was not far from any one of them. He was near to the Gentile, who knew Him not by name ; but His nearness was felt by the Jew, to whom His name had been revealed. Through the prophets His revelation was made. They stood in the cleft of the rocks, covered with His hand whilst His glory passed by. They heard His voice proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.” When we read these words, we recognise the tones of the voice of the God who has been revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Doubtless we have a higher and clearer revelation than the prophets had. We live in the day which they saw afar off. We live in the full light, and they only saw the flushing of the eastern sky. But the new revelation does not supersede the old. The Teacher is the same, and the teaching is the same. The same “God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.”

EXCURSUS ON LECTURE IV.

THE DISAGREEMENTS OF THE CRITICS.

How far do the Biblical Critics agree among themselves? Can there be said to be a general consensus among them on important points? Are there any established and universally accepted results of Biblical Criticism?

To a general agreement amongst Biblical Critics considerable weight would necessarily be attached; still it must be remarked that the questions determined by them are not purely scientific. Extra-scientific, supra-scientific considerations have to be allowed for. The Biblical Critic treats the Bible like any other book; but all Christians hold that in important particulars the Bible is unlike every other book. They trace God's hand there as nowhere else. They find there things which the eye of man hath not seen, nor his ear heard, nor his heart conceived, but which God has revealed by His Spirit.

So then assuming a general agreement of the critics on important points, their agreement has less weight because the subject is not exclusively their own. The critic as such does not take the supernatural elements into his consideration. The supernatural in Scripture, if it exists, is a disturbing element in his calculations. It vitiates some of his reasonings. For instance, knowledge of the distant future is beyond the power of man; but it belongs to God, and may be communicated by Him to man. Critical arguments fixing the date of certain books may be rendered worthless by this consideration. Or, again, on the religious hypothesis the Bible is a record of the workings of supernatural power—the power of God. Narratives containing miracles are, therefore, to be expected, or at any rate are not to be stumbled

at. Their miraculous character gives us no presumption that they are unhistorical, and of a date much later than the persons and circumstances to which they refer.

The critics of course, as such, cannot admit the hypothesis of a supernatural element in Scripture. They start, or should start, with no hypothesis whatever. Their duty is to examine the books just as they find them. They endeavour from various considerations to determine the date, authorship, and circumstances of composition. Such investigations can do nothing but good. Nevertheless, it is to be remembered that they are incomplete. Nay, they are, from a religious point of view, one-sided, because they only deal with the human side of the sacred writings. Thus, whilst they may suggest much that is valuable, and may throw light on important questions, they must leave many questions undecided.

But can it be said that there is substantial agreement amongst the Biblical Critics on the main questions of discussion? On some points, and those not unimportant, they are no doubt agreed. They are nearly all agreed in maintaining that the books of the Old Testament have a very different date and authorship to those traditionally assigned to them. Speaking generally, their agreement is more striking in negative than in positive results; but some important positive results have been also arrived at. The document hypothesis of the composition of the Pentateuch is accepted by nearly all. There is also very considerable agreement as to the contents of one of the main documents from which the Pentateuch is said to be composed. Dr. Briggs, in an article on "The Higher Criticism" in the *Presbyterian Review* (American), Vol. iv., p. 89, remarks that Eichorn's analysis of Genesis (one hundred years ago) has been the basis of all critical investigation since his day, and that his results have been maintained. Professor Smith, in an article on the theories of Wellhausen, in the same Review, Vol. iii., p. 375, points out how the critics are substantially agreed as to the contents of the Elohist document at least in the first thirty chapters of Genesis.

Here then is a critical achievement of a positive character. The Elohist document has been recognised and has been purified

from alien elements with general consent. By a further examination we may test what the agreement of the critics is worth.

What, then, do the critics say concerning the date and character of this document? In its pure, or comparatively pure condition, the problem should be a simple one. It is plainly a problem which the critics may be expected to solve, and to which critical principles should be applicable with success. We may fairly say to the critics, Agree on the date and character of this simple document, and then we will listen to you when you go on to discuss composite books. If, on the other hand, critical principles lead to no conclusive result here, they will plainly be insufficient when the problem is more complicated.

According to the prevalent critical theory of the present day, the Elohistie document is the latest document in the Pentateuch. It is later than Deuteronomy, much later than the "Jahvistic" document. It represents the final development of Mosaism under Ezra.

This theory was first propounded by Professor Reuss in 1833; and it has since been elaborated by his pupils. De Wette, reviewing it in 1835, suggested "there was a reason for this hypothesis coming to the surface, inasmuch as the criticism of the Pentateuch could only thus complete the entire round of possible assumptions." (*Presb. Review*, Vol. iii., p. 110.)

To the question, Is the Elohistie document early or late? we have the following replies.

It is the earliest (certain fragments excepted) of all, say Ewald, Bleek, and others.

It is in part the earliest, and in part the latest, say the late Bishop Colenso and others.

It is all late, say Kuenen and Wellhausen.

So then it seems that the critics differ on the subject of the date, and their difference is of the widest possible kind. Further, the unity of the document is doubtful, for some divide it into two fragments separated by hundreds of years.

The critics' opinions as to the indications of the time of its composition are no less diverse.

Kuenen and Wellhausen are certain that it was written in the times of the Babylonish captivity. Compare with this conclusion the following remarks of Ewald in his "History of Israel."

"The voice of God appearing to the Patriarchs often abounds with cheering addresses and joyous promises even for the seed or later posterity; as though the writer's present (to which such declarations are properly to be referred), were one of those rare ages that feel themselves exalted by a flood of prosperity, and anticipate yet greater for the future." Vol. I., p. 75. "These declarations could originate only at a time when the monarchy was Israel's latest and as yet unmixed blessing. And, moreover, there is not heard throughout the whole work a sound of uneasiness occasioned by troubles of the times; but we rather seem to be breathing the quiet untroubled serenity of a happy Sabbath-tide of the national life." *Ibid.*

"A happy Sabbath-tide"—i.e., when the land remained desolate and enjoyed her Sabbaths!! Thus we may reconcile Ewald and Kuenen.

"As this generally acknowledged dignity of the monarchy of Israel begins with David, we are thus precluded from thinking of the times of Saul. But it is no less self-evident, on the other hand, that such declarations cannot apply to the times of the decay of the monarchy, which commenced after Solomon; and this receives distinct confirmation from the very different tone of the later works." *Ibid.*

On the other hand, Davidson, the English representative of the prevalent German ideas of his day, the funnel, so to speak, through which German theories reached England, says (Introduction to O. T., 1862):

"We are brought to the time of Israel's first king—not farther." "The flourishing time of royalty had not yet come." (Vol. I., pp. 47, 48).

The critics are plainly unsuccessful in determining the date of the Elohist document. Are they more successful in determining its internal character?

On this point we may arrive at some remarkable conclusions by placing statements of different critics side by side.

THE INTERNAL CHARACTER OF THE DOCUMENT.

Ewald. I. 91. "The work still cleaves faithfully and scrupulously to the fundamental matter of the traditions."

Davidson. I. 26. "The substance of tradition is followed with great fidelity."

Kuenen. Religion, II. 163. "His accounts can by no means be regarded as reproductions of popular tradition."

Ewald. I. 42. "An instructive example of this earliest kind of historical composition." I. 78. "Such a childlike conception of all history."

Davidson. I. 26. "More natural view of the olden time."

Kuenen. II. 196. "It unites in itself all the characteristics of the later historiography."

Ewald. I. 42. "Represents traditions very simply."

Davidson. I. 26. "Simple, inartificial."

Kuenen. Five Books of Moses, p. 40. "Too systematic, too little natural."

Ewald. I. 32. "The Book of Origins clothes its driest subjects with unsurpassable grace, and makes of the smallest story a living picture."

Kuenen. II. 161. "The historical picture lacks life and motion."

Ewald. I. 93. "The matter as well as the language and picturesque representation of this work breathes a peculiar fresh poetic air; more rounded and graceful, more instinct with a light poetic charm, no prose can well be than that of this work, which also from its florid style of description belongs to the finest period of Hebrew literature and national life."

Kuenen. II. 158. "He gives reins to his imagination, and is more a poet than an historian. Yet his imagination is anything but poetical in the ordinary sense of the word. His descriptions display unmistakable talent, but still they are monotonous and sometimes even dry."

Ewald. I. 93. "Removed...from the studied description that became usual in later times."

Kuenen. II. 196. "The precise and yet unhistorical chronology; the statistical method, which yet represents the truth but apparently; the regular climax and systematic course—everything is just as we should expect to find it in an author who no longer draws upon living tradition, but depends entirely upon learned research and combinations which to our eyes seem arbitrary."

Ewald. I. 54. "Correct and (as far as the means afforded) faithful historical picture."

Kuenen. II. 158. "The historical reality has little value in his eyes."

Ewald. I. 54. "Exactest and soberest description of human events and affairs."

Kuenen. II. 158. "He gives reins to his imagination."

THE COMPARISON WITH OTHER DOCUMENTS.

Davidson. I. 26. "A simpler religious consciousness and a more natural view of the olden time before Moses, is presented than in the Jehovist, or later writers, where poetry and prophecy influenced the national history."

Kuenen. II. 173. "The Book of Origins lies before us as an irrefragable proof that the prophetic conception of Israel's early history and of the Mosaic legislation no longer fully satisfied the priest in Babylonia."

The 'Account of the Creation.'

Davidson. I. 39. "The latter (the Jehovist) shows an advanced reflectiveness foreign to the other (the Elohist)."

Kuenen. II. 196. "His (the Jahvist's) conception of the creation is childishly simple." "Gen. i. (Elohistic), on the contrary, bears witness to a broad view of things, to much reflection, and to a strong desire to arrange and systematize."

The Account of the Flood.

Davidson. I. 40. "A later, more developed, subjective religion appears in the Jehovist."

Kuenen. II. 197. "The former (Elohistic) pericope is a priestly extension, and at the same time a purification, of the latter (Jahvistic)."

Theology and Morals.

Davidson. I. 31. "The Jehovist represents a more developed theology."

I. 32. "The history of man's moral development (Gen. ii.-iv.) evinces considerable advancement in comparison with the ethics of the Elohist."

I. 32. "In the Jehovist, human anthropology appears in another (a more advanced) stage of development."

Kuenen. Five Books of Moses, p. 47. "The conception of God, in the narratives of the Jahvist, is less pure and elevated than in those of his followers."

Ib. p. 48. "The ideas of the Jahvist are more childlike and artless than those of the other writers, but we shall at the same time have acknowledged that the former do not equal the latter in purity and elevation."

God's Relation to Israel.

Davidson. I. 32. "In the Elohist, the Divine Being...is the God of the Hebrews...the National God. "The idea of God's universal providence had not taken possession of the Israelite mind so early. The heathen are spoken of *only in connexion with the chosen people*. The less developed consciousness of Israel is apparent in this. The Jehovist infers from the unity of God that all the earth belongs to Him. Accordingly all nations are represented as participating in the blessings promised to the patriarchs. They are destined to a share in Israel's salvation. So also Ewald. I. 104."

Kuenen. Five Books of Moses, p. 48. "The oldest (Jahvistic) narrative recognises Jahveh more as the God of Israel than as the only God."

Of course there are points in the Elohist document on which the earlier and later critics have a similar opinion. Both, for instance, agree that it was written by a member of the tribe of Levi. Both observe in him a remarkable method and precision, a turn for chronology, genealogies, and legislation. But notwithstanding, the two estimates of the Elohist document could hardly be more thoroughly opposed. Where one finds life, simplicity, poetic beauty, every sign of national youth, the other finds lack of life, artificiality, every sign of national decay. No abler representatives of the critical school could be found than Ewald and Kuenen. Dr. Davidson in the part of his work we have been quoting borrows chiefly from Bleek. Bleek's critical ability is not to be questioned. We arrive then at this remarkable result; competent critics discussing the same document on substantially the same principles arrive at diametrically opposite results. They disagree, not merely in their theories, which would not be so surprising, but in their fundamental facts.

And now what becomes of the substantial agreement of the critics? We have tested it in a case favourable to them, and find it has no real existence. It is said, we believe, of the interpreters of ancient hieroglyphic inscriptions that they read into them what they wish or expect to find. Judging simply by results, the same accusation might be made against the critics of the Old Testament Scriptures.

CRITICAL RESULTS AND THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

There may be said to be two principal ways of regarding the Bible. The two ways are quite distinct, but they may be trodden by the same man in different capacities without inconsistency. There is the critical way, in which men regard the Bible as any other book. There is the religious way, in which the Bible is separated from all

other books. In the one the man judges the Bible. In the other the Bible judges the man. The Bible has two sides, the human and the Divine ; and the two methods correspond to the two sides.⁽¹⁾ Critics form their judgments on the words of men. Religious men submit to the teaching of the word of God.

The grounds on which the Bible has been accepted as the word of God are two : External Authority, Internal Testimony. The validity of one or the other may be and no doubt is denied by some Christians. Some lay stress on the one, some on the other. Neither can be neglected without loss.

First, there is the external historical witness. The Divine teacher, the Church of God, the keeper and witness of Holy Writ, hands down to her children the Scriptures as Divine and authoritative. They accept them at her hands.

Second, the Scripture bears testimony to itself, and that testimony comes home to our hearts. The Divine Spirit within us leads us to recognize His own words. We find by experience that the sacred writings are a light to our feet and a guide to our paths.

To reject the witness of the Church is to open the door to fanaticism, and to make every man ultimately his own supreme judge of truth and error. The question has sooner or later to be faced. Is a man to judge the Scripture, or Scripture to judge the man ? Is a man bound to *accept a doctrine* contained in the Scripture *because it is there*, notwithstanding a feeling of dislike to it or doubt about it ? Or may he *reject the book or the passage* in which the doctrine is contained *because it is there* ? Formally, the latter is rarely done ; Luther, however, did it. Practically, it is commonly done ; the teaching of certain passages or books of Scripture is ignored.

It is idle to say that the alternative can never occur, for the Spirit of God cannot contradict Himself. In the first place, you assume that the particular Scripture is inspired, the point which the verifying Spirit within you has to prove. In the second place, the two things to be placed side by side are not two pure and simple utterances of the Divine Spirit between which no contradictions can be conceived, but two human conceptions or records of the Divine teaching which experience shows us may be absolutely

opposed. So, then, we come round to the old question. In cases of difficulty and doubt which is to prevail, the Man or the Scripture? If the Scripture, on what basis does Scripture rest? If the Man, what is this but to make every man his own rule of faith and life?

On the other hand, to reject the witness of the Spirit within us to the Scriptures, because it has been abused, because it is indefinite and incommunicable, is to throw away a source of peace and joy. It leaves the Scriptures outside of a man ruling his conscience rather than moulding it. It puts difficulties in the way of their assimilation.

The question now to be considered is, What effect have critical results on the two great witnesses to the divine character of the Scriptures? The critics investigate the different books of the Bible, and arrive at certain conclusions concerning their purity, date, authorship, and the like. Do these conclusions invalidate or weaken the testimony of either of the two great witnesses?

The critics themselves would give different answers to this question. There are some whose avowed aim it is to prove that the Old Testament is not specifically different from other books. So Kuenen maintains that the religion of Israel is, like all other religions, a human invention (*Religion of Israel*, Vol. I. p. 10); and that the Old Testament is not the word of God in any peculiar sense. (*Prophets and Prophecy*, p. 593).

Others, however, who in the main accept Kuenen's arguments and his critical conclusions differ from him widely in this respect. Professor Robertson Smith acknowledges the unique position of the Bible, and admits in the plainest language that it is the pure and perfect word of God. He asserts that no critical result can interfere with this fact. "Of this I am sure at the outset, that the Bible does speak to the heart of man in words that can only come from God—that no historical research can deprive me of this conviction, or make less precious the divine utterances that speak straight to the heart. For the language of these words is so clear that no readjustment of their historical setting can conceivably change the substance of them." (*Old Testament in the*

Jewish Church, Lect. I., 28.) Professor Robertson-Smith does not hesitate to accept the most sweeping conclusions of modern critics, and so his language is the more remarkable.⁽²⁾

Can this view be logically maintained? In the first place it would appear evident that critical results might invalidate the witness of the Jewish Church to the Old Testament. Men could hardly acquiesce in any ecclesiastical decision on the Canon after the critics have proved that it was made in ignorance, in mistake, under a misconception, the consequence of a fraud—a fraud which may be called venial, excusable, even pious, but a fraud nevertheless. The critics dig about the foundations of the Canon, which, they tell us, crumble to dust when exposed to the light of day. Nevertheless some of them say, The edifice should still stand. How can this be?

But Professor Smith makes little of the witness of the Church.⁽³⁾ It is the witness of the Spirit to the heart concerning the Scriptures to which he attaches supreme importance. He asserts that no critical results can affect this witness. Is this so? Let us take a parallel case.

Suppose that the view taken by certain rationalistic critics was correct, and that the gospels were not historical records of the life of Christ, but inventions of the second century. Suppose it proved that Christ never spoke the words attributed to him, and that his life is not historical but mythical, an embodiment of great truths which had come home with power to the writer's heart. Suppose in fact that the gospels are what the critics say the Pentateuch and other parts of the Old Testament are. The supposition would, it is plain, not touch the substance of the gospel teaching, it would merely "re-adjust its historical setting." And yet would it not be fatal to the authority of the gospels? Would any accept them henceforward as God's word? Would not the taint of their origin destroy their influence for good?

A recent recurrence may give us a more exact parallel. No teaching, however pure and high, contained in Shapira's MSS. of Deuteronomy could convince us that God spake to us by means of it. But what is the difference between Hilkiah's MSS. of

Deuteronomy (according to the critics) and Shapira's MSS. ? Both are equally forgeries. The one, no doubt, was forged for a noble, the other for a sordid purpose. That is not sufficient. The immorality of an action is not affected by the goodness of its object. But if it be thought sufficient, assume that Shapira's MSS. was forged in the interests of orthodoxy, to crush prevalent rationalism and infidelity. Will that mend the case ? No ; in such cases we decline to examine further. We say, a tainted fountain cannot bring forth a pure stream. Possibly the moral sense of Josiah's age was less highly educated than our own. That would lessen the guilt of the forger, but it would not alter the character of the action itself. A lie is a lie by whomsoever told, though one liar may be infinitely more guilty than another.

It seems inconceivable that the truth of God should be revealed to us under the outward form of a lie. It is, indeed, said that we are no judges as to the way in which God would make a revelation to us ; but this statement is true only within certain limits. The means by which a revelation is made must be consistent with God's character. There must be nothing immoral about the method. Light will not be wrapped up in darkness or truth in falsehood. The end cannot justify the means. God may, indeed, speak through the mouths of wicked men ; but He will not use a lying witness to testify by lies to the truth. No moral man would knowingly use a forgery in a court of justice even to gain the most righteous of causes. Shall we ascribe to the All-Holy conduct which we should regard as despicable in our fellow men ? Would any high-minded man think himself justified in profiting by the use of unfair means, because the moral sense of his subordinate agent was imperfectly educated so that he did innocently what he did ? If it be said, the witness of the prophet was true ; it is replied, true in substance but false in outward form ; true in the same sense that perjured evidence to the innocence of an innocent man is true. Much, nay, most of its force and power, came originally from its falsehood ; aye, comes to us still.

For, after all, teaching is accepted by nearly all men not

simply because of its intrinsic merits, but because of the authority of the man who gives it. Why do we accept the sayings of our Lord? Is it because they commend themselves to us, because we feel they are divine? This may be true in some cases and with some persons, but it is not universally true. Rather we accept them because we are convinced that He said them. Once prove the contrary, and we hesitate, we doubt, we except, we even deny.

No doubt many will be found to say that the truth of a word, not the authority of its speaker, should determine its acceptance. Practically this is not the case in the majority of instances. Even theoretically it cannot be the case unless the hearer's position is such that he is qualified to criticize the teaching given him. But if the teaching is somewhat beyond him and above him; if he is supposed to understand it only in part; if the teacher can say, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter; then he must accept the teaching in part, at least, on the authority of the teacher, although he may in the first instance have been attracted to the teacher by the beauty of his teaching.

So then, we maintain that the falsehood in Deuteronomy and similar books (the critical theory being assumed true) is an essential element in the authority of the books. The acceptance of the books depended on it. The truth of God was independent of it, doubtless; but not the acceptance of that truth. How do we regard those who invent lying wonders, even with the purest aims?

What the critics do is practically this. They cut away from the Old Testament those circumstances which invest it in our minds with reverence and awe. They tell us that the Jewish Church was entirely mistaken and misled as to the origin of those books which she has handed down to us as Divine. They claim to prove that the formula, "Thus saith the Lord," is only a strong expression for a deep conviction, and thus deprive revelation of its objectivity.⁽⁴⁾ They take away from the Scriptures everything which would give them human authority. The history is fable; the narratives are interpolated and untrustworthy; the speeches are not the words of the men to whom they are attributed, but only suppositions as to what might have been

said or ought to have been said. The miracles, so far from adding authority, are causes for grave doubt and suspicion. The writers themselves are discredited, as men of defective moral development, pursuing a good end by unjustifiable means. And then, when the credit of witnesses and writers and writings has alike been lowered, when, indeed, we might say that from a human point of view the Scriptures are thoroughly discredited, then forsooth we are to be told that the Divine teaching remains unweakened and untouched. We have heard of a theology which is above grammar ; there appears also to be a belief which is independent of facts.

UNFULFILLED PROPHECIES.

It will be said by some that even if, in some few cases, the prophetic word can be proved to be a true prediction before the event, beyond the prophet's foresight ; if besides, a fulfilment of the prophet's word can be established, and that fulfilment cannot be ascribed to accident, nor related to the prediction as effect to cause : yet nevertheless on the other side you must place a number of unfulfilled predictions.

The argument from unfulfilled predictions takes a prominent place in Kuenen's *Prophets*. He adduces a number of instances of prophecies to which no fulfilment can be assigned, and even more which seem to be falsified by the event. The restoration of the kingdom of Israel and its future prosperity, may be taken as a well-known instance of the latter.

The argument cannot be explained away. It rests on facts which cannot be denied. In many cases, no doubt, it is sufficient to say, the historical records are too imperfect for us to arrive at any certain conclusion. If apologists cannot claim a fulfilled prophecy, neither can rationalists claim an unfulfilled one. This explanation cannot be given in every case.

Can unfulfilled prophecies assumed to be numerous be balanced against fulfilled prophecies assumed to be few? Certainly not; unless the fulfilments are so few that they might be ascribed to a fortunate guess—a happy and extraordinary accident.

The chances against the fulfilment of a prophecy of complex form are enormous. Supposing that Jeremiah had uttered twenty prophecies, and that only one, the prophecy of the 70 years' captivity, had been fulfilled, the non-fulfilment of the nineteen would in no way account for or explain the fulfilment of the one.

Nevertheless the fact that many of the prophecies of the Old Testament are, or seem to be, unfulfilled, has an important bearing on our estimate of the value of Old Testament Prophecy. How is the non-fulfilment to be accounted for?

Unfulfilled prophecies may be accounted for in three different ways.

(1) Fulfilment uncertain.

The historical records of many of the nations concerning whom predictions are made are very meagre.

(2) Fulfilment still future.

The prophet very rarely seems to have been able to foresee the *time* of the coming event. Cf. Lecture iv., pp. 153, 154, on this point.

(3) Fulfilment conditional and the conditions unfulfilled.

The conditions of fulfilment were sometimes expressed, but when not expressed were implied. Jeremiah expresses the doctrine very plainly in Jer. xviii. 7-10. Two instances may be given of this.

(a) The prophecy of Micah (iii. 12). This prophecy was not fulfilled because the people repented. The Jews of the time of Jeremiah recognise this conditional character of prophecy (Jer. xxvi. 18, 19).

(b) The prophecy of Jonah against Nineveh. It is unimportant in this connection how we regard the book of Jonah—whether as history or fable. Nothing

can more clearly prove to us that, in the opinion of the Jews themselves, conditions were attached to all prophetic utterances. Nothing could be more definite and absolute than the prediction of Nineveh's overthrow. Yet Jonah recognises from the first the possibility of its non-fulfilment, Divine utterance though it was. The event proved the reasonableness of his fears.

And unless we accept Calvin's system of degrees with their consequences, it is plain that a condition must be implicitly attached to almost every promise or threat of God. If we admit that to men is given such a power of will that they may frustrate God's purposes concerning them, then God's promises at least, however absolutely expressed, must be conditional. God willeth all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth. Seemingly, at the least, this great purpose of God is frustrated by man's perversity. It is possible that this is the reason why God's promises of a glorious future to Israel have never yet been fulfilled. The greater part of the nation preferred the fleshpots of Babylon to hardships in Jerusalem. The remnant who returned were not faithful to their God. They abjured idolatrous worship, but did not learn the secret of true worship. They did not recognise their Saviour and King when He came; and so Jerusalem could not be the centre of rule, Zion the centre of worship, the Jewish nation a nation of priests. Very remarkable is the modification of the prophecy of Amos, made by that Hebrew of Hebrews, James the Just, at the first Council in Jerusalem. Amos had said, God would raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen—that they (the children of Israel) may possess the remnant of Edom and of all the heathen which are called by My (God's) name. James following the LXX. ceases to regard the Gentiles as the possession of the Jews, the tabernacle of David is restored in order that all men may seek after the Lord.

It may be said that this idea of the conditional nature of prophecy destroys its value. It may be replied, may not prophecy and prayer be compared? The promised answers to prayer are subject to numerous conditions; is what may be called the "objective" value of prayer thus destroyed? And further it may be answered, the main subject of prophecy is Jesus Christ Himself. No fulfilment of conditions for His coming was possible on man's part. That Talmudic saying must be absolutely repudiated, If Israel keep but one Sabbath or one fast duly, Messiah at length will come.

EZEKIEL'S LEGISLATION.

Chapters xl.—xlvi. of the book of the prophet Ezekiel, containing what is called Ezekiel's legislation, have too important a place in the critical theory to be passed over without remark. The investigation is of a minute character, and cannot be thoroughly taken in hand here.

At the outset a question of great importance has to be answered. Have we in these chapters a picture of an ideal state of things—a symbol designed for a spiritual interpretation; or have we laws and regulations which, in Ezekiel's intention at least, were to be put in force after the return from the captivity? Most of those who maintain the traditional theory of the composition of the Pentateuch prefer the former theory; it is a point of the utmost importance with the critics to maintain the latter.

The question is a difficult one, and arguments of considerable weight can be produced on either side. Professor Robertson Smith, indeed, settles the question in a few sentences. He says: "A great mystery has been made of this law of Ezekiel, but the prophet himself makes none. He says in the clearest words that the revelation is a sketch of ritual for the period of restoration, and again and again he places his new ordinances in con-

trast with the actual corrupt usage of the First Temple" (Old Testament in Jewish Church, p. 374.)

We may notice in passing that Ezekiel says nothing about a "sketch." That comes from the critical theory. On the contrary, if his words are to be pressed, a full code in all its details is revealed to him (xliii. 11). No doubt his ritual is for "the period of restoration," but yet that restoration need not be the historical one, and seems to be of an ideal type. He does not speak of "new ordinances," and on any theory many of his ordinances are not new. And further, the actual corrupt usage of the First Temple is regarded by him as involving a breach of the covenant, and so a transgression of actual law.

But the most remarkable part of the above statement is that Ezekiel makes no mystery of his law. No mystery! and yet he receives his ordinances by the mysterious method of a vision. He gives exact measurements for the size of the temple and of the city, and for the allotments of the tribes, which must be of an ideal character, for they are literally impossible. The stream which issues forth from the door of the sanctuary is plainly nothing but a mysterious symbol. Manner and matter of Ezekiel's legislation are thus seen to be mysterious, and yet we are told that the prophet makes no mystery of it.

The difficulties in the way of regarding it as a symbol are no doubt great, though they can be hardly insisted upon by the men who make the detailed plans of the tabernacle in the wilderness an ideal sketch. It is difficult to see how exact measurements and architectural plans can have had any symbolical meaning. But perhaps no such meaning need be given them. Details in themselves unimportant add to the general effect of a picture. There are always many details in parables and allegories to which no purpose can be assigned. This we may say, detailed description is a characteristic of Ezekiel's style. His visions and his historical pictures sufficiently prove this. His details may therefore be regarded by us as of less importance.

In great measure the difficulty we are considering arises from the subject matter of the vision itself, and is not a conse-

quence of any particular interpretation of it. Those who believe that Ezekiel spoke by the Spirit of God have practically to face the same difficulty, whether they regard the regulations as intended to be put in force, or as symbolical of spiritual truths. Those who regard the vision as mere literary drapery, or as an embodiment of Ezekiel's strong convictions, will have their own difficulties in accounting for these authoritative laws, and these minute plans, of a captive priest of an exile nation. A sacrificial system is given to Israel for the first time, when he had no temple, altar, sacrifice, or rational hope of regaining them. Levitical priests are degraded from offices which have no existence at the time. The Holy Land is parcelled out amongst a group of exiles, and amongst tribes which exist only in name. To be sure we have a parallel to all this, the critics supply us with one. They picture to us Ezra in Babylon elaborating plans for the wilderness-tabernacle, and laws suited only for the wilderness wanderings. Ezekiel's ideal legislation for the Holy Land is natural indeed to this.

Two remarks of some importance may be made here. (1) Ezekiel's code never came into force. The presumption is that it was never intended to come into force. The liturgy of the Apostolical Constitutions seems to be a parallel instance. It is not probable that Ezra and his colleagues would pass by or modify ordinances claiming to have the direct authority of God, and specially revealed for use amongst the exiles on their return. The hypothesis that here we have a modification of the old Mosaic Law, seems far more probable. Change of any sort in that Law should have taught the Jews an important spiritual lesson.

(2). Ezekiel does not issue his ordinances in Moses' name, and yet we are told that by a "legal fiction," "in Israel all law was held to be derived from the teaching of Moses." (Old Testament in Jewish Church, p. 385). This fact causes an inconsistency in the critical theory. The author of Deuteronomy, of which Ezekiel's laws are an expansion, had spoken in Moses' name. Ezra and his co-workers, for whose legislation Ezekiel supplied the first sketch, did so afterwards. What they got from him they ascribed to Moses, and yet the book Ezekiel was extant to shew their mistake.

Professor Robertson Smith notices three points in Ezekiel's legislation, which prove it to be earlier than the Levitical legislation. It is needless, he thinks, to rehearse more; these are sufficient to prove that it "is a first sketch of a written priestly Torah, resting not on the law of Moses but on old priestly usage, and reshaped so as to bring the ordinances of the house into due conformity with the holiness of Jehovah in the sense of the prophets and the Deuteronomic Code." (*Old Testament in Jewish Church*, p. 377). We propose to give these points a detailed consideration.

The first and most important of the three points has reference to the position of the Levites in Ezekiel's legislation. This alone, it is said, is "sufficient to fix the date of the Levitical law as later than Ezekiel."

It is a part of the case of the critics that up to the time of the exile, priests and Levites were reckoned to be of equal rank. "In all the earlier history, and in the code of Deuteronomy, a Levite is a priest, or at least qualified to assume priestly functions." Ezekiel is the first to make the distinction between priests and Levites. In his code the Levites are degraded from the priesthood, hitherto theirs, as a punishment for ministering at idolatrous altars. "He knows nothing of an earlier law in which priests and Levites are already distinguished, in which the office of Levite is itself a high privilege." (*Old Testament in Jewish Church*, p. 375).

Now, is it a fact that on this point there is a conflict between authorities assumed to be earlier and later? Is the account given in Deuteronomy, the earlier historical and prophetic writings, inconsistent with that to be found in the later parts of the Pentateuch and the Chronicler? No doubt the accounts given in the two sets of authorities are not identical. The one leaves unnoticed distinctions which the other carefully makes. But ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical accounts of the same matters are wont to differ. The critics make much at times of the difference between histories written in the prophetic and in the priestly spirit. May not this difference in spirit be sufficient to account for the difference in description?

When we consider the notices of priests and Levites to

be found in the earlier set of authorities, our first thought must necessarily be, how few and incomplete they are. Priests and Levites, or Priest-Levites, there certainly were. Sacrifices must have been continually offered. Sacrifices imply settled rites. There must have been sacrificial laws or customs which had the force of law. It has been remarked (Delitzsch) that the highly developed priestly and sacrificial system of ancient Egypt almost necessarily implies the like amongst the Israelites after their long sojourn there. In the face of these facts, the absence of all sacrificial and priestly technicalities in the earlier historians and the writings of the prophets, and even in Deuteronomy, is surprising. It is not merely that we have few (if any) indications of what is called "the priestly legislation," but we have few indications of any priestly laws whatever. The critical argument has thus a wider bearing than the critics give it; in fact it proves too much. They argue the non-existence of the legislation of the three middle books of the Pentateuch. Their argument, if valid, proves that there was no priestly legislation of any kind, *i.e.*, no definite sacrificial system at all. That is a conclusion which many, taking the history and circumstances of the Israelitish nation into account, will refuse to make.

As a matter of fact, the difficulties of the case we have to deal with arise, not from a conflict of evidence, but from absence of evidence. The notices in the earlier authorities are few and ambiguous. There is no conflict between the authorities. Where the one speaks, the other is silent.

And now to consider the evidence in greater detail.

(a) *Deuteronomy.*

Whatever view is taken of Deuteronomy, all will admit that it is not of the nature of a formal code, and that its author's great object was not to enforce ritual observances. Ceremonial details are passed over by him. In many cases he must assume knowledge on the part of priests and people. When a man is unfolding the spirit of God's law, when he is describing the dispositions of the heart with which God's worship must be celebrated, he is not likely to be writing rubrics. He may be a rubrician nevertheless, but for the time he has other things to do.

The evidence of Deuteronomy seems to be this:—

- (1). *Priests and Levites are regarded by him as two classes of persons.* The former live at the one place which God has chosen to place His name there. The latter are scattered throughout the tribes of Israel. The difference of dwelling-place implies a difference of office; the priests alone can offer sacrifices, for they alone dwell where sacrifices can be lawfully offered.
- (2). *The ground of distinction between Priests and Levite is never defined.* The priests are never called the sons of Aaron. It may be remarked, however, that the only priests mentioned by name in Deuteronomy are Aaron and his son (Deut. x. 6). Priests-Levites, *i.e.*, Levitical priests—a phrase found also in Chronicles—is their designation. The priesthood is thus regarded as an appanage of the tribe of Levi, and not as an appanage of the leading family in that tribe. This, it is to be remarked, is the view taken by all the authorities—early or late. It is not Aaron and his family who are in the first instance chosen for the priesthood, but the tribe of Levi. Aaron derives his priesthood from his connection with that tribe. The choice of his family and himself out of the tribe was most natural in itself. We should have anticipated it from his relationship to Moses, and his own important services to the nation. We find the same connection of the priesthood with Levi in Malachi, who is at the earliest a contemporary with Ezra. We find it also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which undoubtedly presupposes and accepts the Levitical legislation. All authorities agree that the priesthood is Levi's.
- (3). *Priests and Levites are not confounded in Deut. xviii. 6—8.* The critical explanation of this passage is: Any Levite is qualified to become a priest. He may take upon him the priesthood whenever he chooses. The words used may be capable of this interpretation; if so

the Deuteronomist was enunciating a very inconvenient law. No such definite statement is made. It is not said that the Levite can offer sacrifices or become a priest. It is only said he shall minister in the name of the Lord his God, as all his brethren do which stand there before the Lord. The words used may, no doubt, describe sacerdotal functions; they need do no more than describe Levitical functions as defined by the priestly code. There are many kinds of ministry. The Deuteronomist does not use the phrase of the Levitical legislation (his own in Deut. x. 6), and say that the Levite may minister to God in the priest's office. Then it would have been a very different thing. The phrase "stand before the Lord" is used of people as well as priest.

- (4). *Deuteronomy does not give the Levites any office which (1) Ezekiel or (2) the Chronicler refuse to them.* A comparison of Deut. x. 8 with Ezekiel xlv. 11—15 will prove the first point.

The Chronicler (1 Chron. xxiii. 30; 2 Chron. xxix. 11), although he refuses the tribe of Levi the priesthood, allows all the Deuteronomist gives them; nay, he (1 Chron. xxiii. 31) seems to give them more than the Deuteronomist. If these words had occurred in Deuteronomy, how much stronger the critics' case would have been.

The evidence of Deuteronomy on Priests and Levites may be summed up thus. It does not contain all that the Levitical legislation contains; but there are on this point no inconsistencies either in matter or spirit between the two, nothing which needs explanation. If the *silence* of Deuteronomy needs accounting for, we may say that it plainly does not furnish us with a complete system of laws. It has been called with some truth the People's code. It certainly does not concern itself with Priests and Levites.

- (b). *The earlier historical Books.*

The Pentateuch and the book Joshua must of course be

omitted from our consideration here. The remarkable narrative in Numbers xvi. (Cf. Lecture III., p. 85) may be referred to in passing. Cf. Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, vol. II., p. 303, for the critical explanation of it. Under this head the evidence is meagre and inconclusive. The history of Micah (Judges xvii., xviii.) can hardly be said to indicate what could be lawfully done. It is a record of lawlessness from beginning to end. At the most it only proves that a semi-sacerdotal character was attributed to Levites (Judges xvii. 12, 13). They were not priests, but it was thought they were especially qualified to become so.

Judges xix. 18 requires a great deal of interpreting before it can be pressed into the controversy. 1 Samuel ii. 27—36 would be decisive against the critical theory (for the priesthood is regarded as Aaronic, not Levitical); but it is said to be a later interpolation. Curiously enough it is used by the critics to prove that Zadok was not of the line of Aaron. (*Old Testament in Jewish Church*, pp. 254, 427.)

At the dedication of the temple we read in 1 Kings viii. 4 of "the Priests and the Levites." Thus a distinction seems to be drawn between them. But here the aid of the books of Chronicles is used for the correction of the text. It is indeed convenient to have authorities which can be accepted or rejected at pleasure. Sometimes the Chronicler's statements are as the dust in the balance against critical hypotheses. Sometimes they modify the statements of the primary authorities.

The conclusion sought to be drawn from 1 Kings xii. 31 in favour of the critical view is met by what has been said under *a* (2), or by conferring Heb. vii. The passage in Kings implies that the priesthood is an appanage of the tribe of Levi. The restriction of the actual exercise of the priestly office to a single family of the tribe is not inconsistent with this (Cf. Heb. vii. 5—14).

The Levites are mentioned in two other passages (1 Sam. vi. 15, 2 Sam. xv. 24.) in the earlier historical books. In both cases they are doing work enjoined upon them by the Levitical legislation.

The chief remark still to be made on these few and ambiguous passages is that nowhere are Levites found filling the priestly offices, in worship regarded by the historian as lawful. Samuel, a Levite, offered sacrifice no doubt, but he had an extraordinary commission as a prophet of God, and he lived in times when God had forsaken the tabernacle in Shiloh, and had not yet chosen the hill of Zion. The earlier history does not confound priests and Levites: on the contrary, it implicitly distinguishes between them. Levites are found performing one set of duties, priests another set. Levites as such are not priests.

(c). *The earlier Prophets.*

Again we may say, little or no evidence is to be derived from them. As Kuenen says, "The prophets trouble themselves little or not at all about public worship in general, and the qualifications of the priestly office in particular." Their evidence is simply this. They connect the priesthood with the tribe of Levi. Malachi, who must have been acquainted with the priestly legislation, and may have lived under it, does not use language differing from that of the prophets before the exile.

(d). *The Book Chronicles.*

The evidence of this book is plain and clear enough, but its truth is denied. Taking the book at the critical estimate, we may still derive some useful evidence from it. Though the Chronicler draws clearly the distinction between Levite and Priest, he has no objection to the phrase Priests-Levites, and he does not depreciate the Levites in any way whatsoever. If we ascribe his book to a very late date, and if we take the worst

view of his accuracy and fairness as a historian, we cannot set aside his statements as of no weight. After all a statement in a historical book is more likely to be true than false. The Chronicler had before him early documents which he used. Public opinion and popular knowledge of the nation's history would be some check upon him. He could hardly invent absolutely as he pleased. In this case the supposition that he twisted and distorted facts and invented speeches for his heroes will not suffice for the critics. They must have wholesale invention of history. They must suppose that the narrative of David's organization of the temple services is purely mythical from beginning to end. You have there a number of dry details mixed with genealogies—strange things to invent, it must be confessed. But, if the critics are right, the Chronicler must have invented them.

An important point in the Chronicler's evidence may be here noticed. He seems to indicate that the Levites, during the period of the kings, had been growing in importance. The Levites, on one occasion, are favourably contrasted in point of zeal and earnestness with the priests. They are represented as taking a very important part in the temple services. They supply the priests' place in an emergency (2 Chron. xxix. 34; xxxv. 14.)

(e). *The Prophet Ezekiel.*

And now we come to Ezekiel's remarkable words (xliv. 9—16) of which the critics have made so much. They interpret them thus:—Priests, the Levites had been, in days gone by, but they should be priests no longer. The priesthood which had belonged to the tribe of Levi should henceforth belong to the tribe of Zadok only.

The first remark to be made is, that if Ezekiel meant this he might have expressed his meaning more clearly; he says that the Levites should not be priests in the days to come, but he does not say that they have been

priests in the days gone by. If he had said so, his language might be paralleled from Chronicles (1 Chron. xxiii. 31).

As we have seen, the priesthood is regarded by all the authorities as Levi's. Ezekiel says no more than this, that some of the priestly tribe shall, at the restoration, have no share in the priestly office. Possibly he may be referring only to certain branches of the priestly family of Aaron.

But let us consider what Ezekiel's position is here. He is contemplating and describing a new order of things. Whatever view we may take of him or of the Pentateuch, he is plainly not bound altogether by the Mosaic arrangements therein contained. He is the prophet of a new revelation. In the new order of things, the Levites might or might not have had a higher place. The restrictions to one family might have been removed. The priesthood inherent in the tribe might have been actually exercised by all its members. What Ezekiel says is, You have been unfaithful in the past, and so you shall have no high office in the future. This interpretation will seem more natural if the remarks made under head (*d*) were correct. If the Levites had been, under the later kings, growing in importance, and had been encroaching on priestly functions, they might have hoped that in the new state of things their equality with the sons of Aaron would be established on a firm basis.

Ezekiel is said to hold an intermediate position between the earlier and later authorities. That statement may be disputed. According to the critics the earlier authorities reckon the Levites to be of equal dignity with the priests; then Ezekiel degrades them. But in the later legislation Levi's position is not one of degradation. We may ask in the language of Moses, "Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you

near to himself, to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?" Nowhere, as we have seen, are the Levites reckoned of greater importance and of higher dignity than in the book of Chronicles. Ezekiel degrades them. How can a position of degradation be intermediate between two positions of honour and dignity? Yet again, Ezekiel's selection out of the tribe of Levi does not lead up to that made by Ezra. "Sons of Zadok" does not lead us on to "Sons of Aaron." Still less is this the case if, as the critics say, Zadok was not even of the family of Aaron.

(f). *Ezra and Nehemiah.*

Ezra's code is not supposed to come into force till the year 445 B.C., *i.e.*, for ninety years after the return from the captivity. But, if the history is to be relied on, the distinction between Priests and Levites was recognized from the first, as a matter of course; and there is no trace of Ezekiel's selection of the sons of Zadok from the rest of the Levites. Plainly we have here the Levitical legislation in force before Ezra.

The whole evidence is now before us, and we ask whether it can be fairly said to substantiate the critical hypothesis. The alleged discrepancies between the two sets of authorities have been shown to have no existence. From first to last the earlier books contain nothing on the relations between priests and Levites inconsistent with the Levitical legislation.

The other two points of Ezekiel's legislation noticed by Professor Robertson Smith are of less importance, and will not require so long an investigation. His second point is,

Ezekiel's provision for stated and regular sacrifices.

"The Levitical ordinance of stated offerings cannot have preceded the existence of a provision for supplying them." In Ezekiel's laws "we see a reference to *præ-Exilic* practice, when the Temple was essentially the king's sanctuary, and the stated offerings were his gift. In the old codes the people at large are

under no obligation to do stated sacrifice. That was the king's voluntary offering, and so it was at first after the exile." (Old Testament in the Jewish Church, pp. 375, 376.)

Sacrifices and provisions for sacrifices are not more closely connected than a king's revenue and the taxes from which it is derived. You may modify the latter without touching the former. Would a provision for sacrifice come before an ordinance of sacrifice? Surely not, unless the method of discharging an obligation precedes the obligation itself. Ezekiel is here, as we have noticed before, contemplating a new departure. If we assume that his laws were intended to be carried out, if we assume also that he would not dare to modify any fundamental regulations of the Mosaic Law; yet still, under the altered circumstances of the nation, he may have altered the provision for supplying the sacrifices.

The statement that in præ-exilic times sacrifice was a royal affair presents the greatest difficulties. It seems contrary to the whole tenor of the history. Naturally, royal national sacrifices receive greater notice; but a religion without private, individual sacrifices is a huge improbability. It is strange, indeed, if the children of Israel were in ancient times under no obligation to do stated sacrifice. The well-known maxim, "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*," might be used to prove that sacrifice is a Divine institution. The much abused passage in Micah vi. 6—8, most certainly proves that the people thought themselves bound (whether by law or custom is immaterial here) to come before God with burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin. The critical history of sacrifice in Israel involves this great improbability. Sacrifice, through practised with acceptance by the founders of the race, was only a part of popular or natural, as distinguished from revealed, religion; and, although depreciated and even denounced by the prophets of God, it was nevertheless in later times made of Divine obligation and ordered according to a "Divinely sanctioned" ritual.

"A third point in Ezekiel's law is *the prominence given to the sin offering and atoning ritual*.

This is an argument founded on the silence of earlier writers—a precarious basis. One of the great lessons of the captivity to

the children of Israel was a deeper consciousness of sin. This deeper consciousness would naturally draw attention to sin offerings and the atoning ritual.

The illustrations Professor Smith gives here seem ill-adapted to his purpose. Why should the author of Kings give an account of the ceremonies of the purification of the altar? It is not his way. But how lucky the Chronicler was to find so convenient a peg on which to hang his explanatory gloss (Cf. 1 Kings viii. 62; 2 Chron. vii. 9).

Again Ezekiel is said to be the first to give us a sketch of the ritual of the day of Atonement; that day in its full development is regarded as post-Ezraic. This theory involves the critics, as Delitzsch has shown, in a number of difficulties. Amongst other things we have to find two men (Ezra and another) of post-exilic times who both could and would compile laws so expressed that they would only be practical in the Mosaic age, and not betray by anachronisms a later date. "It would be very extraordinary if the ritual of the day of Atonement, in which the mercy seat occupies so conspicuous a place, dated from a time when the ark and mercy seat had ceased to exist." (Professor Green, *The Presbyterian Review*, Vol. III., p. 155).

Our investigation, though incomplete, must close here. Enough, we hope, has been said to show that the inferences drawn by the critics from Ezekiel's legislation cannot safely be made.

[For the critical theory on the points discussed in this Excursus Cf. Kuenen, Vol. ii. pp. 299—303; Robertson Smith, *Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, pp. 374, etc. On the other side Cf. Articles in Vols. III. and IV. of *The Presbyterian Review*, and more especially Professor Green's Article, Vol. III., No. ix. pp. 149, etc.]

NOTES.

LECTURE I.

Note 1, p. 14. Cf. Kuenen's *Prophets and Prophecy in Israel* (Longmans, Green & Co., 1877), pp. 575, 583, 584.

Note 2, p. 16. *Ibid*, p. 575.

Note 3, p. 17. Cf. Kuenen's *The Religion of Israel* (Williams and Norgate, 1882), Vol. I., pp. 211, 212.

Note 4, p. 17. Cf. Kuenen's *Prophets*, p. 2.

Note 5, p. 19. i. Mac. iv. 46, xiv. 41.

Note 6, p. 21. Cf. Kuenen's *Prophets*, Introduction p. xxx., pp. 81, 88, 410, 429, 443, 559, 562, 587, 589; chapters xi. and xii. *passim*.

Note 7, p. 22. *Ibid.*, p. 561.

Note 8, p. 22. Cf. Kuenen's *Lecture Delivered at Haarlem, 1870; The Five Books of Moses* (Williams and Norgate), p. 19; also Kuenen's *Prophets*, p. 32.

Note 9. Cf. *Excursus* at the end of the *Lecture*.

EXCURSUS ON LECTURE I.

Note 1, p. 26. Cf. Kuenen's *Prophets*, p. 547. "The possibility of exegetical mistake must be acknowledged in the case of Jesus also, unless men should wish—at variance not only with psychological probability, but also with facts—to ascribe to Him complete knowledge of truth in every department." Cf. also Bishop Colenso on the *Pentateuch*, Part I., pp. xxx., xxxi; Part III., Preface, pp. xxxi.-xl.; Perowne on the *Psalms* (Second Edition), Vol. ii., pp. 286, 287, 288, 303; Liddon's *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 464-470.

With respect to the general question of the exegetical authority of the New Testament, Kuenen (*Prophets*, p. 453) asks the question, "Are the quotations drawn from the Old Testament by the writers of the New, of such a nature that we can acknowledge them as an exegetical authority?" He answers, "*Certainly not.*" "These citations do not satisfy the requirements of the grammatical and historical interpretation. If we are in earnest in the maintenance of these requirements, it is impossible for us to assign any authority to the New Testament authors in this domain."

Note 2, p. 28. Cf. Perowne on the Psalms, Second Edition, Vol. ii., p. 303; Meyer on Gospel of St. Matthew (T. & T. Clarke), Vol. ii., pp. 94, 95.

Note 3, p. 28. Bishop Colenso on the Pentateuch, Part i., Preface, p. xxx.

Note 4, p. 33. Kuenen's Religion of Israel, Vol. ii., pp. 18, 19.

Note 5, p. 35. Kuenen's Religion of Israel, Vol. i., p. 113.

LECTURE II.

Note 1, p. 40. Cf. Kuenen's Religion of Israel, Vol. ii., p. 7, also Vol. i., p. 272. "It is quite certain that nearly all the laws of the Pentateuch date from much later times."

It is interesting to notice that Wellhausen takes away from Moses even "the ten words." For his reasons, if such they may be called, cf. Art. Israel, Encyclopædia Britannica. He thinks the later history of the nation makes it very difficult to imagine that the religion of Israel could have been established on a moral basis. "Moses gave no idea of God to his people. Why should he indeed? *For Moses to have given to the Israelites an enlightened conception of God, would have been to give them a stone instead of bread.*"

Note 2, p. 40. This theory of the composition of the Pentateuch is given in a connected form in Kuenen's Five Books of Moses, (Williams and Norgate), pp. 17, etc.

Cf. also Kuenen's Religion of Israel, Vol. i., pp. 383, etc., Vol. ii., p. 15, etc., Vol. ii., p. 231, etc.

Note 3, p. 51. Cf. Kuenen's Prophets, pp. 434, 435, 436; Kuenen's Religion of Israel, Vol. I., p. 23 and passim. Ewald, on the other hand (The History of Israel), recognises over and over again that truth is a distinguishing characteristic of Israelitish history. Cf. *e.g.* Vol. I., p. 31. "The Hebrew tradition possesses a vivid sense for truth and fidelity," &c., and p. 55. "Historical writing among this people became childlike, simple-hearted, and filled with the pure love of truth." He gives as a reason, p. 57, "The ancient people Israel passed the most glorious time of its history in such a happy domestic seclusion that, on that very account, the truth of its own history *could not be much obscured and perverted in its memory.*"

Note 4, p. 51. Cf. Kuenen's Prophets, p. 430. "In our days, the individuality of the historical writer is held in check, as it were, by public opinion. This demands from him truth, nothing but truth, and shews itself severe in the maintenance of this requirement, and in the punishment of every sin against it. In antiquity, in Israel as well as elsewhere, the case was different. The historian could then move much more freely. Attention was

directed more to the spirit in which he wrote, and to the tendency of his narrative, than to the truth of the entire representation, and to accuracy in the details. Cf Ewald in passages above cited on the other side; also the following (Vol. I., p. 57): "No single name of the author of a narrative work has been preserved . . . so much more highly did the people esteem *the history itself in its grandeur and truth* than the person who related it. He observes that "one can easily understand how powerfully *the true religion of the Israelitish people must have preserved its traditions* from degenerating into falsehood and exaggeration." Ibid, p. 14.

One can hardly imagine two more opposite ideas than those of Kuenen and Ewald, on the relations between the religious ideas and the historical narratives.

Note 5, p. 55. Cf. Kuenen's Prophets, p. 33. "It was very natural that he should attempt to fill up the hiatus which occurred in the tradition." Cf. also Ibid, page 415, 432, and p. 443. "The prophetic historians not only felt themselves compelled to labour for the religious education of Israel, but they thought themselves also justified in making their description of Israel's fortunes subordinate and subservient to that object." And p. 444. "The prophets trod a beaten path, when they gave free reins to their belief, and used history as a vehicle for their own ideas."

Note 6, p. 55. Starting with the critical conclusion, viz., that Ethical Monotheism was a creation of the prophets of the 8th century B.C.,—religious anachronisms can of course be found in abundance. Even with that assumption non-religious anachronisms are rare. It is very remarkable, for instance, how the authors of Genesis avoided them.

Canon Rawlinson says, (Historical Illustrations of the Old Testament, p. 4): The more exact the knowledge that we obtain, by discovery or critical research, of the remote past, the closer the agreement that we find between profane and Biblical history. Cf. also Ibid, pages 5, 6, 210, 212.

For the Jewish method of writing history, cf. Kuenen, The Five Books of Moses, p. 19.

Note 7, p. 59. There is one point in which the Biblical characters are remarkably consistent with truth and reality. They are inconsistent with themselves. We find ourselves enquiring, Can that bad man have done this good thing, or this good man have done this bad thing? And we find an answer in our own experience, and in S. Paul's words, "When I would do good evil is present with me."

This point is entirely overlooked or rather misapprehended by the Biblical critics. Inconsistencies of character represent to them varying and inconsistent traditions. The David of the Psalms and of later traditions cannot have been the David who was merciless in war, the David who treacherously murdered Uriah to conceal his sin with Bathsheba. Irreconcilable traditions have come down to us con-

cerning Solomon. Wellhausen (*Art. Israel, Encyclopædia Britannica*) divides Samuel into four, (i) The patriotic Seer who brought out Saul; (ii) The prophet of the Elijah and Elisha type; (iii) The maker and unmaker of kings with supernatural powers; (iv) The man who opposed the setting up of the kingdom. It can hardly be said you have inconsistencies here, at the most you have only the different sides of one character. It would be interesting to know into how many persons the present Premier of England and his predecessor would be divided on critical principles, and how many inconsistent traditions would be discerned by dissecting any of the contemporary records of their lives.

Note 8, p. 61. Cf. Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, Vol. i., p. 346, "The sin of Jeroboam the Son of Nebat,—*as the historian of later days calls it.*" Also Vol. i., p. 354. "In condemning the Israelitish kings, the historian has used the ideas of his own times as a standard"; also Vol. i., p. 344. "We cannot possibly hold Ahijah's address to Jeroboam to be authentic as it stands: it is full of later ideas and expressions, and fits so exactly into the framework in which the historian places his events, that in its present form, we have no hesitation in attributing it to him." Cf. also Vol. i., p. 355; Kuenen's *Prophets*, p. 398.

Considerable interest attaches to those chapters in I. and II. Kings in which the lives of Elijah and Elisha are recorded. Elijah and Elisha worked more miracles and, if we may say so, more marvellous miracles than any other prophets in the Old Testament. The editor of the two books of Kings is here embodying into his narrative earlier records. "The story of Elijah and Elisha clearly took shape in the Northern kingdom; it is told by a narrator who is full of personal interest in the affairs of Ephraim, and has no idea of criticising Elijah's work, as the Judean editor criticises the whole history of the North, by constant reference to the schismatic character of the Northern sanctuaries." Robertson Smith, "The Prophets of Israel," p. 116. It is remarkable that these earlier records which cannot be much later than the events they record are so full of miracles.

Cf. Kuenen's *Prophets*, pp. 569, 570, for Elijah and Elisha's connection with the line of Jehu, which maintained the image worship in Dan and Bethel.

NOTES TO THE EXCURSUS ON LECTURE II.

Note 1, page 64. Cf. Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, vol. I., pp. 108, 111, 113.

Note 2, page 64. *Ibid.* p. 108.

Note 3, page 66. *Ibid.* p. 108.

A great deal might be said as to the simplicity of the thought and teaching of Genesis. It is not childish and so ridiculous; such are all other records relating to the same period of the history of the human race. It is childlike and so simple; it is not inconsistent with the ideas of the prophets of the 8th century, but in many respects it is unlike them.

The following points may be noticed:—

- (a) *Anthropomorphistic expressions* with respect to the Deity. Genesis abounds in them. This is natural, even necessary. What teacher of young children does not feel himself obliged to use them? But they are the anthropomorphisms not of a corrupt but of a simple theology. They are verbal, not essential. God is spoken of as a man, but He is not regarded as a man. Later on anthropomorphisms were connected with nature and hero worship, and so were avoided by the prophets.

- (b) *Theological ideas.*

The patriarchs are represented as having been taught great truths; but it seems as if they had hardly digested them, hardly grasped their full significance and their place in the domains of nature and experience. Did the patriarchs realize the idea of God's Omnipresence. Genesis teaches us this truth but the patriarchs had hardly learnt it, cf. Gen. iii. 8, iv. 16, xvi. 13, xviii. 21. Did they regard God as One who searches the hearts and reins? The same answer may be given. Notice how God is represented as arriving at the knowledge of the guilt of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. xviii. 20-22). Observe the difference of tone between Abraham's simple and childlike expostulations with God in Gen. xviii. 23, etc., and the deep heart searchings and anxious intercessions of the prophets.

- (c) *Idolatrous systems.*

Image worship is not unknown, and there are such things as "strange gods." But idolatry is not the sin of the age. No idolatrous system is presented to our notice, the names of no false gods appear. The sinners of the age—the antediluvians and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, are not described as worshippers of false Gods, but as offenders against fundamental principles of morality. Here is a strong proof of genuineness. Children do not enquire what God they worship; children's sins have relation to morals, not religion. But what an irresistible temptation it would be to the later prophetic historian of the

critical theory to utilize the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, in his attack against the sin of his age—idolatry.

(d) *Political ideas.*

These are of the simplest. We have kings, but, except in Egypt, hardly kingdoms. The idea of one great kingdom embracing all the nations of the earth has not been conceived. The later enemies of Israel, the Philistines, the Syrians, the Assyrians are in no way described. Yet the historian has his opportunities. Society seems to be divided into masters and slaves; the idea of rich and poor (a very common one in the prophets) never appears. The family, not the nation, is the unit of political life. What commerce we find is just where it ought to be, on the highway between Syria and Egypt. Advanced civilization is confined to Egypt, and here again the author is historically correct.

(e) *The nature of sin.*

We have not got to the time of a formal code of law. Sin in Genesis is regarded as disobedience to God's express command. See this exemplified in Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. Abraham knew that when God spake, he must obey; he knew little more. It is known that murder, adultery, and unnatural crimes are contrary to God's will; former judgments have taught the world this. But the sins of civilization, the sins which the prophets denounce, *e.g.*, false witness, oppression, covetousness, swearing, do not appear. How do the patriarchs regard the sin of lying? Might we not say that God appears to be teaching them in Genesis, by His providential dealings, that lying is a sin? Could any of the patriarchs have formulated that summary of God's requirements we find in Micah vi. 8? Abraham's life may exemplify it: but do we ever find in Genesis any theory concerning the life of which God approves?

(f) *Absence of reference to persons and institutions of a later date.*

We have hardly, unless we except Genesis 49, any foreshadowing of Israelitish prophets and prophecy. This is remarkable in a work said to be composed or edited by prophets. There is no mention of families or tribes or priests, Jerusalem or David's line, Moses or his law. We have not got so far as temples, we have only altars. We have no distinctions of sacrifices. This again is remarkable, if priestly historians gave the book its final shape.

We may notice here that there is no attempt in Genesis to describe, except in the widest outline, the character of any of the antediluvian patriarchs. Adam and Eve hold an important place in the narrative, but who could say what the features of their character were. This is not the author's method when he has materials to work upon. From Abraham onwards the description of character is vivid.

It can hardly be said that the critical questions with respect to Genesis as a whole, and with respect to Genesis 49 in particular, are bound up together. But very much might be said as to that strange mixture of knowledge and ignorance of the future—a characteristic of prophecy—which we find there. How inexplicable are some of the statements contained in that chapter, on the supposition that the author lived after the settlement of the twelve tribes in the land of Canaan.

Note 4, page 69. Ibid, p. 109.

Note 5, page 71. Ibid, p. 112.

Note 6, page 72. Kuenen's Prophets, p. 115.

Note 7, page 73. Kuenen's The Five Books of Moses, p. 49.

Note 8, page 73. Kuenen's Religion of Israel, Vol. I. p. 23.

Note 9, page 74. Blunt's Undesigned Coincidences, Part I. § 12, p. 53.

Note 10, page 75. Kuenen's Religion of Israel, Vol. I. p. 110. Kuenen's Five Books of Moses, p. 19.

Note 11, page 76. Kuenen's Religion of Israel, Vol. I. p. 112.

Note 12, page 76. Ibid, p. 111.

NOTES ON LECTURE III.

Note 1, p. 78. The following points in the prophetic teaching may be here noticed :

(1). *The prophets do not regard themselves as the teachers of new truths.* Kuenen admits this (Religion of Israel, Vol. I., 374). This is the more remarkable when we find that they derive their mission directly from God, and that they reckon their words to be the words of God. Jeremiah speaks of a new covenant and a new order of things, but he does not speak of a new doctrine of God or new rules of worship.

(2). *If the prophetic doctrine was new the prophetic denunciation of their people's sins was unfair.* Those sins were not sins against light, but sins of ignorance. What meaning can we attach to such statements as we find in Hos. iv. 1, 6, viii. 12, 14, xi. 3 ? Again, how can the statements in 2 Kings xxii. 13-20, be justified ? The nation could not be fairly punished by exile for the transgression of ordinances which had not been given them. It must be remembered that on the critical theory, the prophetic

teaching is new in substance, not merely in form; and that the laws of Deuteronomy are absolutely new, not old traditions and customs legalized, codified, and ascribed to Moses.

(3). *It is fully admitted that the prophets do not attempt to enforce the observance of the ceremonial law.* If, under the circumstances, they had, they would have shewn a strange want of appreciation of the spirit of that law, and a strange ignorance of the work God had given them to do. To use a modern phrase, their work was "mission work." A missionary does not exhort an ungodly and half-heathen people to the observance of festivals and fasts, acts of reverence and worship, almsgiving and the like. He may have the most thorough appreciation of the value of these things to Christian people, and yet say nothing about them in his mission addresses. When the foundations of a holy life have to be laid, men are not wont to attempt anything more.

Note 2, p. 78. Cf. Sayings of the Jewish Fathers, Dr. C. Taylor, pp. 110, 113-118, 128; and Old Testament in the Jewish Church, Professor Robertson Smith, pp. 145, 146, 158-161.

Note 3, p. 79. Cf. Kuenen's Prophets, p. 561.

Note 4, page 79. Cf. Excursus on the teaching of the prophets, p. 113, etc.

According to the critics, the prophets' materials were scanty, contained elements of error, and had been wrongly interpreted for generations. Nevertheless three or four prophets independently produced from them one and the same system of doctrine, and a system in a high state of development. The critics deprive the prophets in great measure of the teaching of the historical records; they deprive them wholly of the teaching of the law; most of them will not admit of any direct objective communication from God to the human soul. They thus leave the prophetic teaching wholly unaccounted for; yet it is their great aim to account for that teaching on naturalistic principles. The sarcasm of De Wette on the school of Reuss expresses no more than the truth, "They have suspended the beginnings of the history of Hebraism upon airy nothings."

Paradoxical as it may seem to say so, the traditional, supernatural theory of the origin of the Law gives the most natural explanation of the teaching of the prophets. The Law was the school of the prophets, and schools they must have had. Grasp of spiritual principles like theirs implies long and careful teaching of elementary truths for generations. From the Law's "precept upon precept, line upon line, a little here and a little there," an advance to the prophetic teaching was possible.

It may be asked, How could the Law be said to have educated the people of Israel when many of its chief precepts were ignored or violated? The answer is, The Law may notwithstanding have furnished an ideal of holiness to the people of Israel or its teachers. It may have influenced them much in the same way as

our Lord's commands in Matthew v. 39-42 influence us. Its general spirit may have pervaded men who were unacquainted with many of its provisions. The laws which men disobey and ignore have no inconsiderable power in moulding their characters and determining their lives. The English laws against the papal power during the middle ages were not without considerable influence on the national character, even though the præ-reformation history is a continuous record of their violation.

Note 5, p. 81. Cf. the preceding note here, and the excursus on the prophets of the eighth century B.C. Four parallel streams of the same water demand a common fount. The critical theory fails to indicate one.

Note 6, p. 81. Kuenen's Five Books of Moses. Cf. pp. 22, 23.

Note 7, p. 81. Cf. Kuenen's Prophets, p. 585, "Ethical Monotheism is their creation." Also Religion of Israel, i. 371.

The grounds on which it is alleged that Ethical Monotheism is a creation of the prophets of the 8th century B.C., appear to be mainly these; (i) The prevalence of polytheistic worship amongst the Israelites up to that period; (ii) The writings of these prophets are the earliest authorities admitted by the critics. "Here," says Kuenen, (Prophets, p. 36) "we have firm ground under our feet. Here we can find...a criterion for distinguishing between history and a tradition more or less unhistorical, between facts and subjective convictions." With respect to (i) it need only be said, (a) Experience shews that the plainest commands of God are constantly violated by men and even by good men; (b) Polytheistic worship prevailed in Israel after the 8th century B.C. Reason (ii) is plainly no reason at all. If we assume that the writings of the prophets are the earliest extant Hebrew writings, why should we jump to the conclusion that the prophets are the earliest teachers of the doctrines contained in their writings. The presumption is all the other way; and, what is of more importance, the definite statements of the prophets themselves. To maintain their theory the critics must throw over many statements of the history as later interpolations, and they must throw over their primary authority, the prophetic writings themselves. The critical theory is not built up out of the facts. It is itself the criterion between "fact, and subjective conviction." When you select your authorities; when, further, you follow your authorities so far as it may be convenient; you may frame what theory you please. In dealing with the historical narratives the method is this, sometimes they are used to prove the truth of the critical theory; sometimes that theory is used to prove their falsehood.

Note 8, p. 81. This is admitted by all. Cf. Kuenen's Prophets, p. 74.

Note 9, p. 82. Cf. Kuenen's Five Books of Moses, pp. 20, 22, 23, 30, 42.

Note 10, p. 85. It is worth noticing that those sections of the book of Exodus which by earlier critics were regarded as plainly Mosaic in substance, are ascribed by the school of Reuss to Ezra and his co-workers. That is to say, those sections which are stamped with the mark of the wilderness are the latest sections of all. The laws in Leviticus (chapters 1—7) may be especially noticed here. The ordinances are addressed, not to priests generally, but to "Aaron and his sons." "The local references always presuppose the camp and the wilderness." "A peculiar adaptation to the circumstances of a later period is needed if it is to be applied to them." Cf. Bleek's Introduction to the Old Testament, § 74, Vol. I., p. 213.

Leviticus xiii., xiv., xvi., xvii., Numbers xix., Ex. xxv—xxx. and other sections are also mentioned by Bleek as undoubtedly Mosaic. He asks, "How could legal precepts have been formed at a later time, in such a shape as that in which we now have them in the Pentateuch? Still less can we look upon them as the work of some later author who wilfully corrupted the record; for what interest could such a man have had in composing them in a way which would be entirely devoid of practical application in his own time, and would require a special interpretation to accommodate them to later circumstances." Ibid., § 74.

And again, "Even if he had intentionally studied, in order to avoid all appearance of a later origin, to frame the ordinances in such a way as that they should be in conformity with the Mosaic age, he would then doubtless have added directions of such a nature, and with such modifications as would make them valid in later times; at least, expressions would certainly have been suggested to him, unconsciously and against his will, which were derived from the circumstances of his own time. But this is nowhere the case. The whole tenor of the directions with regard to the priests, their arrangements, and their official duties towards the sanctuary, precludes any unprejudiced judge from any other view than that they were ordered by Moses himself." Ibid., § 77.

It must be remembered that the critics of the school of Reuss refuse to admit that the Levitical legislation is in substance Mosaic. They regard priestly legislation as an invention of later times. Ezra put forth laws and principles hitherto unknown. It will be noticed that those sections regarded by Bleek as unmistakably Mosaic contain the priestly legislation in its fullest development. We have the tabernacle with all its arrangements. We have all the different kinds of sacrifices (Lev. vii. 37). We have the law of the one sanctuary (Lev. xvii.) We have also, strange to say, the ceremonial of the great day of Atonement, and yet its observance is never alluded to in the Old Testament.

Note 11, p. 86. Cf. on this point a review of Professor Robertson Smith's *Prophets of Israel* in the *Spectator* of May 27, 1882, p. 696.

Note 12, p. 86. Cf. Excursus on Jeremiah, p. 123. The Mosaic authorship of well known ancient laws might readily have been admitted by the people. This is not the critics' case. They say that the different legislators put forth new, unknown laws, contrary to the immemorial customs of the nation, under the name of Moses, and that the nation accepted them as such without objection or enquiry. It is this which constitutes the great difficulty. Cf. On this point Professor Green in the *Presbyterian Review*, Vol. III., No. IX., pp. 113, 114.

Note 13, p. 87. Cf. Excursus on Jeremiah, p. 123.

The critics acknowledge fully the opposition between the canonical prophets, and the prophetic schools and the people of Israel generally. Cf. Kuenen's *Prophets*, pp. 575—577.

Note 14, p. 89.

This paragraph has been modified in an important particular, to obviate certain criticisms by Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, in a lecture delivered at the request of the Cambridge Unitarian Society, in answer to these lectures, and reported in the *Cambridge Review* of March 7, 1883. In the face of the use of the word Torah in the Psalms and the Prophets, it was wrong to assume that it must necessarily mean the Mosaic Law here.

With respect to Torah, the following facts may be noticed:—

- (a) Torah has a close connection with the priests. Cf. Ez. vii. 26, Mal. ii. 7. Priestly Torah should not be confounded with the Prophetic Word. The translation "Doctrine" would thus seem to give a false idea. Kuenen says that the oral decisions which the priests gave concerning points of law, worship, ceremonial purity, etc., are thus called here. *Religion of Israel*, Vol. i., p. 340.
- (b) We have abundance of evidence in Deuteronomy, the Pentateuch generally, Joshua, and the books of Kings, that at the times when these books were written the word Torah had a technical sense commonly given to it. It was the title given to laws and ordinances ascribed to Moses. Some of this evidence is on the critical theory contemporaneous with, or a little earlier than Jeremiah. He may, therefore, have been using the word in the same technical sense.
- (c) Whether or no Torah was given in the shape of "oral decisions," there was, some time before this, a written Torah. Even Kuenen (*Religion of Israel*, Vol. i., p. 56) admits that this is possible. And indeed Hosea's words, "I have written unto him the great (or manifold) things of my law" (viii. 12), are decisive on this point. We may fairly put together these facts. There was a written Torah in the times of the 8th century prophets. The first written Torah that comes to light is a part of the

Pentateuch. The Pentateuch is the only book to which the title Torah is applied.

Jeremiah viii. 8. It is to be noticed that Jeremiah does not say that the lying pen of the Scribes made a lie for the law of Jehovah, but the law of Jehovah for a lie. So he is not charging them with forging a new law, but with giving old laws a false interpretation. Jeremiah would certainly never think of calling any utterance of lying scribes by the name of "the law of Jehovah," any more than he would have called the words of false prophets words of Jehovah.

So then, here we have evidence of some authoritative teaching ; sufficiently definite in shape to admit of a comment. Mark the comment is a false one. As a rule corrupt interpretations succeed true ones ; certainly all interpretations succeed their text. These comments were written, as the word "pen" shows ; so almost necessarily the law commented on was written also. We gather from this passage that in Jeremiah's time there was a well-known written law or torah of ancient date.

Note 15, p. 90. Cf. here review in *Spectator* of May 27, 1882. It has often been observed that an argument similar to this would prove that Christianity did not exist for centuries after Christ.

Note 16, p. 92. An exception to this statement may be made. The code of the New Covenant was promulgated with far greater force, yet it has often been disobeyed.

Note 17, p. 93. "The Prophets of Israel," Lecture I., pp. 1, 2.

Note 18, p. 93. Besides this, the Mosaic Code, on the traditional hypothesis, was to serve the people of Israel throughout their national existence. This would cause special difficulties in the way of its acceptance by the people. Some of its ordinances could not be obeyed in the wilderness, nor, indeed, in Canaan, except in quiet and settled times (cf. *Presbyterian Review*, Vol. IV., No. XIII., pp. 123, 125). Others, on the contrary, were specially adapted to the circumstances of the wilderness, and needed modification when the people had entered upon their inheritance. Thus at the first, certain laws were in abeyance; throughout the history, others would need adaptation and modification. Professor Robertson Smith says that it was impossible for God to give the children of Israel a code of laws which should serve them, without modification, through all the centuries of development in Canaan (Old Testament in Jewish Church, p. 333). It may be questioned (1) whether he is not here making the rationalizing hypothesis which he elsewhere repudiates ; and (2) whether he is not exaggerating a difficulty, for Eastern nations develop very slowly. But does it not appear probable that a code given by God would stand in a different relation to those under it from a code given by man ? Human codes would fit men better, for they would be more likely to condescend to human and natural faults and weaknesses. A Divine code would at the best of times represent an unattained ideal. The human code would rule but not teach. The

Divine code would teach even when it failed to rule. It is indeed asserted that the Pentateuchal system was not the means by which God's grace came to Israel during the times of the Judges and the Kings (Old Testament in Jewish Church, p. 306). It is an assertion easily made, but impossible to prove. History, even sacred history, does not chronicle the coming of God's grace, for man cannot tell whence it comes or whither it goes. Great religious revivals, reformations, or revolutions, and the effects produced by them, are recorded; but not the grace which comes to pious souls in the use of appointed means, sacrifices or sacraments.

Note 19, p. 94. The Mosaic law gives us an ideal of the life of the Children of Israel, the Book of Judges describes to us their actual life. The contrast is remarkable, but such we are wont to find when Divine ideals and human practice are placed side by side. Could we not find similar contrasts in the history of the Christian Church?

Note 20, p. 95. Cf. *Excursus on the Judges*, pp. 119, 120.

Note 21, p. 97. Jealousy of the tribe of Judah on the part of the other tribes was a strong feeling even during David's reign. The revolt of Jeroboam involved, as an immediate and natural consequence, the setting up of sanctuaries in opposition to the sanctuary in Zion.

Jephthah's words, Judges xi. 24, prove the truth of the last sentence in this paragraph.

Note 22, p. 99. It is very remarkable that Josiah's reformation is never referred to by Jeremiah in his book. Indeed, to judge from his description of the state of the Jewish kingdom, there might have been no reformation at all. Neither in the history, nor in the prophecy, do Jeremiah and Josiah ever stand side by side. In like manner, Isaiah took no prominent part in Hezekiah's reformation.

Note 23, p. 99. Cf. Kuenen, *Five Books of Moses*, p. 24. The Religion of Israel, Vol. II., pp. 17, 25. Similarly, Davidson, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Vol. I., p. 375.

Note 24, p. 101. It may be said that a similar false development may be found in the history of the Christian Church. A period of bondage succeeded a period of freedom. No doubt retrograde periods occur in the history of all institutions, but we do not expect to find them arise from the teaching of men who confessedly give a higher development to the original idea. If the parallel is to be exact, we must compare the prophets with the authoritative teachers of Christianity. In the free evangelical spirit they resemble S. Paul. Can we imagine anyone like S. Paul imposing a new yoke of bondage on his converts?

Note 25, p. 101. The neglect of some of the chief enactments of the law for centuries must be fully admitted. As instances may be given the laws relating to the Sabbatical Years (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21); the Great Day of Atonement; the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. viii. 17.)

Note 26, p. 101. Wellhausen, however, (*Art. Israel*, *Encyclo. Britan.*) thinks that when we have ceased to regard the legislation of

the Pentateuch as an authentic source for our knowledge of Mosaism, it becomes a somewhat precarious matter to make any exceptions in favour of the Decalogue. He finds another Decalogue in Ex. xxxiv. He thinks the later history of the nation makes it very difficult to imagine that the religion of Israel could have been established on a moral basis. So Wellhausen deprives Moses of that which Kuenen regards as his essential characteristic.

Note 27, p. 101. Cf. *Religion of Israel*, Vol. I., p. 286.

Note 28, p. 102. Cf. *Amos* viii. 5, *Hos.* ii. 11, *Is.* i. 13, for the earlier teaching, and *Is.* lvi. 2—6, lviii. 13, *Jer.* xvii. 20—27, *Ez.* xx. 12, 13, 16, for the later teaching on the Sabbath.

Note 29, p. 104. It is not easy to determine when the doctrine of a future life was thoroughly grasped by the Jews. The critics have thrown doubt on much of the evidence. The great teachers of the nation would naturally grasp the truth in its practical bearings long before the masses of the people. But the doctrine must have been familiar to those amongst whom the rising of Samuel from the grave, the ascent of Elijah into heaven, and the miracles of Elisha, were well-known stories. Moreover, a belief in the existence of angels would seem to imply the doctrine of a future life.

Note 30, p. 107. Cf. Kuenen, *Five Books of Moses*, p. 25, *Religion of Israel*, Vol. II., p. 19; Davidson's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Vol. I., p. 376.

THE WRITINGS OF THE PROPHETS OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY B.C.

Note 1, p. 109. Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, Vol. I., p. 10.

Kuenen asks, "How far can we go back with safety? The answer which perhaps will surprise some must be: Not farther than the 8th century before our era." *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 30, etc.

"Although, considered as a whole, the Old Testament may with justice be adduced as testifying in favour of supernaturalism; its separate parts, regarded by the light of criticism, speak loudly for a natural development both of the Israelitish religion itself and the belief in its heavenly origin." *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 11.

Note 2, p. 110. There is no controversy as to the general character of the teaching of the 8th century prophets, *Amos*, *Hosea*, *Isaiah*, *Micah*, etc. Cf. chap. I., Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, for his estimate.

Note 3, p. 110. Contrast here the account found in the Christian Apologists of the doctrines of God found in the heathen religions and the philosophic systems. Cf. also *Justin*, *Dialogue with Trypho*, chaps. 7, 8. *Justin* found in the prophets the teaching which he had sought in vain elsewhere.

- Note 4, p. 110. Cf. Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, Vol. I., pp. 270, 271. Also Kuenen's *Five Books of Moses*, p. 9.
- Note 5, p. 111. Cf. Kuenen's *Religion*, Vol. I., pp. 292, 293, and also pp. 280, 281.
- Note 6, p. 111. *Ibid.*, p., 319.
- Note 7, p. 111. *Ibid.*, pp. 326, 327, 328.
- Note 8, p. 112. *Ibid.*, pp. 332, 336, 340.
- Note 9, p. 112. *Ibid.*, pp. 346, 347.
- Note 10, p. 112. *Ibid.*, pp. 347, 358. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 175.
- Note 11, p. 113. *Ibid.*, pp. 367, 368.
- Note 12, p. 114. *Ibid.*, p. 367.
- Note 13, p. 115. *Ibid.*, p. 369. "For a natural process," etc. Cf. Lecture delivered by Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, reported in the *Cambridge Review* of March 7, 1883, p. 271.
- Note 14, p. 116. Kuenen. *Ibid.*, p. 371.

THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES.

- Note 1, p. 118. Cf. Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, Vol. I., p. 144.
- Note 2, p. 119 Cf. *Judges* xi. 24, 35—39.
- Note 3, p. 119. Cf. *Presbyterian Review*, Vol. IV., Number XIII., p. 125.

JEREMIAH AND HIS TIMES.

- Note 1, p. 121. Cf. *Jeremiah* xlv. 18.
- Note 2, p. 121. Cf. *Jeremiah* v., as an illustration of this.
- Note 3, p. 122. Cf. *Jeremiah* vii. 4, xviii. 18. *Ezekiel* vii. 26 refers to the latter saying.
- Note 4, p. 122. Thus many interpret *S. Joh.* i. 21.
- Note 5, p. 122. No doubt the true policy of Judah, as a nation under God's especial protection, was to decline the alliance both of Babylon and Egypt; but when God's protection was removed from her, submission to Babylon was the Divine command. The words in *Deut.* xxiii. 7, have been thought to indicate the late date of the book, as they might seem to express a desire after the Egyptian alliance, but that alliance was never recommended by the canonical prophets.
- Note 6, p. 123. Cf. *Jeremiah* xxxviii. 5, 24—26.
- Note 7, p. 123. It is part of the critical case that the book *Deuteronomy* draws no distinction between the sons of Aaron and the

tribe of Levi generally. The passages bearing on this point are found in Deuteronomy xviii. Although the distinction in office between the two may not be clearly drawn there (there was no reason why it should), there does seem to be a plain distinction of class. The instructions concerning "the priests the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi," are separately given. Cf. Excursus on Ezekiel on the general question.

Note 8, p. 125. Cf. Lecture by Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, in *Cambridge Review*, March 7, 1883.

Note 9, p. 126. Professor Robertson Smith's remarks (Old Testament in Jewish Church, pp. 370—372) deserve notice here. He says that "Jeremiah denies, in express terms, that a law of sacrifice forms any part of the Divine commands to Israel." Thus he interprets Jeremiah vii. 21—23 literally. Nevertheless "in speaking thus the prophet does not separate himself from the Deuteronomic law; for the moral precepts of that code . . . he accepts as part of the covenant of the Exodus."

Here, then, apparently, we have as direct a contradiction as can be conceived. Jeremiah accepts as divine the Deuteronomic code, which says, "Hither shall ye bring all that I command you; your *burnt offerings* and your *sacrifices*." Nevertheless, he represents God as saying that He gave no commands concerning *burnt offerings* or *sacrifices* at the time of the Exodus.

How are these statements to be reconciled? The answer is "To Jeremiah, therefore, the code of Deuteronomy does not appear in the light of a positive law of sacrifice." These words seem to mean that sacrifice is not the leading idea of the Deuteronomic code. Though containing ordinances concerning sacrifices, its great idea is not sacrifice. If so, the Professor interprets Jeremiah vii. 21—23 in two senses. He insists on the strict literal meaning, in order that he may prove the non-existence of the levitical legislation; then he interprets it more loosely, that he may be able to reconcile Jeremiah with his authorities. He goes on to remark that the sacrifices of Deuteronomy are not of an expiatory character. They are "material offerings summed up under the principles of gladness;" "natural expressions of devotion," "not peculiar to Israel," "voluntary tributes." The argument apparently is, that as they are not sacrifices of a particular nature, they are not sacrifices at all. Jeremiah, it may be noticed, in the passage we are considering, does not expressly mention sin offerings.

Some remarks of Professor Smith, which follow, may be noticed here. He is pointing out the differences between the Deuteronomic and Levitical legislations.

He says, "The paschal victim itself may be chosen indifferently from the flock or the herd (Deut. xvi. 2), and is still according to the Hebrew of xvi. 7, presumed to be boiled, not roasted, as is the case in all old sacrifices, of which the history speaks."

The differences pointed out here are two-fold (1) that the paschal victim, according to the Deuteronomic code need not be a *lamb*, and (2)

that it was to be boiled, not roasted. According to the Levitical legislation, the victim must be (1) a lamb, and (2) must be roasted, and not boiled.

We have here an instance of the way in which the critics interpret one passage of Scripture so that it shall be contrary to another.

The Hebrew phrase corresponding to "thou shalt therefore sacrifice the Passover (Deut. xvi. 2) is found, I believe, only in that chapter, and so its exact meaning cannot be determined by usage. But there is no reason why *Pesach* should not have here, as elsewhere, a wider meaning than the Passover Lamb." "To keep the Passover," in verse 1, means to keep the Passover Feast; to sacrifice the Passover, in verse 2, may mean to offer Passover Offerings. For these the same Hebrew word in the plural is used in 2 Chron. xxxv. 7, 8, 9. It is worth noticing, in confirmation of this view (1) that the author of Deuteronomy, when in verse 6 he is definitely referring to the Passover Lamb, puts the article before *Pesach*, and (2) that in verse 3 the words occur, "Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith." The Passover Lamb was eaten only on the first night. The Passover Offerings were taken from both flocks and herds (Numbers xxviii. 17—24, 2 Chron. xxxv. 7, 8, 9).

But it is said that the paschal victim, according to Deut. xvi. 7, must be "boiled, not roasted."

This statement implies that the Hebrew root *Bashal* must mean to *boil*, and cannot mean to *roast*. *Bashal* has, no doubt, very commonly the meaning to boil, but etymologically there is nothing to restrict it to that meaning. In many cases its meaning is ambiguous, and it may well be translated to cook, the meaning which Gesenius gives it in his Thesaurus. There is one passage moreover (2 Chron. xxxv. 13) which definitely contradicts the statement that *Bashal* cannot mean to roast. The words (E.V.) are, "And they *roasted* the Passover with fire, according to the ordinance, but the other holy offerings *sod* they in pots, etc." Here *Bashal* occurs in both senses. To cook with fire is to roast, to cook in pots is to boil.

If the priestly chronicler, writing in the spirit of the Levitical legislation, could use *Bashal* of the Passover, it is certain the statement that the Deuteronomist ordered the Passover to be "boiled, not roasted," is quite baseless.

NOTES ON LECTURE IV.

Note 1, p. 127. Cf. Reuss, *Les Prophètes*, quoted in the introduction to Kuenen's *Prophets*, note p. xxvii. "First of all it is proper to recognise the fact that here we have nowhere to deal with special

predictions relating to contingent events." Further on he says that the mention of Cyrus proves the author of Isaiah, 40-66, was a contemporary of that king of Persia.

Kuenen (Prophets, p. 4) says that "Prophecy is a human phenomenon proceeding from Israel, directed to Israel. From God? yes, undoubtedly, for from Him are all things, and we in Him . . . but not the less from man, specifically from Israel, the highest utterance of the Israelitish spirit." In this theory of prophecy the idea of prediction of the future is necessarily excluded.

Cf. also Davidson's Introduction to the Old Testament, Vol. II. pp. 459-466, Vol. III., p. 172. Dr. Pusey's *The Book of Daniel the Prophet*, Introduction, pp. 5, 6.

Note 2, p. 129. Cf. Dr. Pusey's *Daniel the Prophet*, p. 5.

Note 3, p. 129. Kuenen (Prophets, p. 401) says, what the prophets say of themselves "excludes the supposition that they had supernatural powers at their command. The fortunes, for example, of Jeremiah—the prophet whom we know best—become on this supposition a perpetual enigma."

Note 4, p. 130. This is acknowledged by Professor Robertson Smith, (*Old Testament in Jewish Church*, p. 17). "We have almost no contemporary helps for the study of Hebrew antiquity, beyond the books which were received into the Jewish Canon."

Note 5, p. 130. In Røediger's *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar*, p. 11, we find the following: "Yet an earlier stage of development of the Hebrew-Canaanitic language, or a form of it which must have existed before the time of the written documents in our possession, and have stood nearer to the common and not yet divided speech of the Semitic race, can even now be recognised and established." Again, "Most of these [peculiar] poetic idioms are in the kindred languages, particularly the Aramæan, just the common forms of speech, and may be regarded in part as archaisms which poetry retained, in part as acquisitions with which poets, familiar with Aramæan, enriched their native Hebrew." Ibid. p. 13. Again, the peculiarities of these later writers are not all Chaldaisms. Some . . . must have belonged in earlier times to the vernacular Hebrew, especially as it seems in northern Palestine. Ibid. p. 15.

Havernick comes to the same conclusions, (*Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 96). We find that in the north of Palestine there was a dialect approximating to the Aramaic." On p. 150, he gives a list of words peculiar to poetry in Hebrew literature, but found in the ordinary Aramaic. p. 153. "There must in the former (style of speaking in the North of Palestine) have been Aramaisms." p. 153, "The song of Deborah contains undoubted Aramaisms." p. 186. He speaks of "Aramaising verbal forms of the book of Ruth which do not at all betray the later Aramaic; but that which in the Hebrew, as well as the Aramaic, has remained as an original constituent of the language.

Prefix Shin and Paragogic letters may be taken as two instances of peculiarities to be found in early Hebrew, northern Hebrew, and late Hebrew in common.

Note 6, p. 131. Linguistic arguments in questions of Old Testament Criticism are to be used with great caution as drawn from too narrow a field. The latest critical conclusions, however, seem to throw discredit on the facts which seemed most firmly established.

It is generally admitted that the Hebrew of the times of the captivity and after, was less pure than that which had gone before. The Hebrew of Jeremiah and Ezekiel is inferior to that of the prophets of the eighth century. The writer of Kings writes better Hebrew than the writer of Chronicles. The Psalms of the Exile and Return differ considerably from the Psalms ascribed to David. Many arguments have been adduced to show that the Hebrew of the Pentateuch and Joshua is more ancient than that of any other books of the Old Testament. Without going into details, broad lines of distinction between the Hebrew before, and the Hebrew after, the exile, seem to be plainly traced. It is worth notice that the critical theory obliterates these distinctions or leaves them unexplained. Psalms containing Aramaisms are no later than the Psalms in which they are absent. Writers of pure and of corrupt Hebrew live at the same time. The simple Hebrew of Genesis is written by writers of various dates. The history of the Hebrew language thus seems to yield results contrary to those obtained from the critical history of the religion of Israel.

No. 7, p. 133. See Note 8, Lecture I. Cf. Excursus on "The disagreements of the Critics" here.

Note 8, p. 134. Cf. Is. xli. 21-23; xliii. 9; Amos iii. 7; Deuteronomy xviii. 21, 22.

Note 9, p. 135. The book Jeremiah illustrates all the statements of this paragraph. Cf. also Pusey's Daniel, pp. 246, 247.

Note 10, p. 137. Religion of Israel, Vol. III. p. 112. The words immediately preceding the quotation in the text are well worth notice. "The *form* of the book, in consequence of which Daniel foretells what was already the past or the present for the author, gave them the impression that they had an infallible oracle before them." In other words, it was the falsehood in Daniel which constituted its power. Further on he speaks of the bad effect which the book had in calmer days (p. 113, 114).

Note 11, p. 138. Cf. Pusey's Daniel the Prophet, pp. 230-232, to shew that "the Messiah was not expected, when, according to Daniel, He was not to come; when, according to Daniel, He was to come, He was expected."

Cf. Westcott's Origin of the Gospels, pp. 129, etc. (3rd edition), for the darkness which overshadowed Messianic hope soon after the beginning of the second century, A.D.

Notice also the contrast drawn between the hopes of the heathen and the Hebrews in Hardwick's Christ and other Masters, Vol. I., p. 119.

Note 12, p. 139. Cf. Excursus on Unfulfilled Prophecies here.

Note 13, p. 140. Cf. for critical explanations of the prophecy of 70 years, Kuenen's *Prophets*, pp. 309-312. Davidson, *Introduction to Old Testament*, Vol. III., p. 98, says, "We may go farther with Hitzig, and pronounce 11b-14a (Jer. xxv.) supposititious *because the seventy years' captivity in Babylon is too specific to be pronounced in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.*"

Note 14, p. 140. Cf. Pusey's *Daniel*, Lectures II. and III.

Note 15, p. 140. This is fully admitted by the most orthodox interpreters of Holy Scriptures. Cf. a number of quotations collected by Kuenen in his *Prophets*, chap. I.; also *Prophecy a Preparation for Christ*, pp. 30, 38.

Note 16, p. 142. Ewald says, "*Nabi* has lost its root and must develop derivatives from itself." For discussions on its etymology settling nothing, cf. Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, Vol. 1. pp. 213, etc., and Robertson Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, p. 389.

"Undoubtedly the *Nabi* foretells the future, but that he does foretell it is not indicated by the name he bears." Kuenen's *Prophets*, p. 41.

Note 17, p. 143. Cf. Bishop Wordsworth's comment on 1 Cor. xiv. 1. "In order that you may prophesy, *i.e.*, may declare or expound God's Word." The "prophesyings" of Elizabeth's reign and Jeremy Taylor's "Liberty of Prophesying" illustrate earlier English usage.

Note 18, p. 146. "The Old Testament is a great prophecy, a great type of Him who was to come and has come." De Wette, quoted by Hardwick, *Christ and other Masters*, Vol. I., p. 78.

Note 19, p. 147. The story is told of Zerubbabel in 1 Esdras iii., iv.

Note 20, p. 148. Cf. Tennyson's poem, *The Flower*, for the thought of this passage.

Note 21, p. 151. Cf. Dean Payne Smith's *Prophecy a Preparation for Christ*, p. 38, 65, etc.

Note 22, p. 152. Cf. Kuenen's *Prophets*, p. 74.

Note 23, p. 158. From the nature of the case no proof could be given which would produce certainty in our hearts. We may have full assurance, but we can have no more. As Hooker has taught us, "The assurance of what we believe by the word of God is not so certain as that which we perceive by sense." Spiritual and heavenly truths are in themselves more certain than truths concerning this earth of ours, but they are not so certain to us. There are plainly good reasons why this should be. The faith that rests on an irrefragable proof loses much of its moral value, and indeed ceases to be faith at all.

NOTES ON CRITICAL RESULTS AND THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

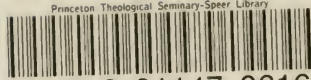
Note 1, p. 170. Surely the statement that the Bible has a human side needs no defence in these days. Professor Robertson Smith's words may be thoroughly accepted: "To try to suppress the human side of the Bible, in the interests of the purity of the Divine Word, is as great a folly as to think that a father's talk with his child can be best reported by leaving out everything which the child said, thought, and felt" (Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 19). To suppress the human side of the Bible is as intolerable an error as to deny the humanity of the Lord. Nevertheless, we must not so maintain the humanity as to deny the divinity. The advocates of the critical theory seem to make the divine side of the Bible an unreality, for they turn the father's talk with his child into the child's ideas or convictions of what his father might have said, or thought, or felt.

Note 2, p. 170. Cf. Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 9, for some other strong words to the same effect. Nevertheless, the truth of the criticism in *The Guardian* of Aug. 30, 1882, cannot be denied. "His whole conception of them [the prophets' character and work] is essentially naturalistic. The admission of the divine agency is only incidental, and looks sometimes as if it were complimentary only."

Note 3, p. 170. Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 4.

Note 4, p. 170. Professor Robertson Smith would probably not accept this statement as representing his opinion, but even he seems to make the word of God nothing more than "a divinely sanctioned means." His explanation of "The Lord spake unto Moses" may be compared here. "To save the literal 'unto Moses' is to sacrifice the far more important words 'The Lord spake.' *The time when these ritual ordinances became God's word—that is, became a divinely sanctioned means* for checking the rebellion of the Israelites, and keeping them as close to spiritual religion as their imperfect understanding and hard hearts permitted—was subsequent to the work of the prophets" (Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 306). It is difficult to see what valuable sense is left to the words "Thus saith the Lord" on this theory. The explanation comes to this—some men invented certain ordinances, and called them divine laws; God sanctioned them (? how), and so made them His word.

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